

MEMORIAL

ADDRESSED TO THE

HONOURABLE COURT OF DIRECTORS

BY

LORD WILLIAM CAVENDISH BENTINCK,

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

THE MUTINY AT VELLORE,

WITH THE

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THAT EVENT,

FEBRUARY 1809.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Memorial was presented to the Court of Directors on the 7th of February, 1809. It was in fact an appeal to them from their own former sentence, pronounced in the year 1806, against the Madras Government, of which I was at that time President. In consequence of this appeal and applications of a similar nature from other quarters, the Court entered into a review of the transactions connected with the Mutiny at Vellore; and finally, on the 25th of July last, came to a Resolution on the respective merits of the various parties implicated in those transactions. With many of the sentiments expressed in the Resolution relating to my conduct, I had reason to be satisfied; and to the spirit of courtesy and conciliation in which the whole of it was drawn up, I am far from insensible. But it did not, in my view, render me that full measure of justice to which I thought myself entitled. Under this impression I am induced to make the Memorial public. The important political considerations involved in the question of the Vellore Mutiny, have indeed given to that question much of a public character. Yet I am aware that these sheets will probably interest few persons unconnected with India. I should, however, think it unjust both to myself and my friends, if I neglected to place within the reach of every enquirer, the means of forming a correct judgment on the circumstances of that event. It will, at least, be satisfactory to me to know that, if the subject should again excite discussion, either private or public, there will not be wanting an authentic testimony of the part which I acted on that occasion; of the principles by which I was guided, and of the manner in which my measures influenced the general course and result of affairs.

In discharging this duty, it is with no small effort that I have submitted to the necessity under which I found myself placed of publishing somewhat plain animadversions on the conduct of many honourable men, whose names I would not willingly have mentioned except with unmixed praise. Of those gentlemen however, and particularly of Sir John Cradock, to whom such frequent reference is made in the following pages, I have, as far as related to general character, always thought with respect; and if, in the defensive step which I am reduced to take, I run the risk of wounding their feelings, I can sincerely say that it is at the expence of my own.

TO THE
HONOURABLE THE COURT OF DIRECTORS.

GENTLEMEN,

I BEG leave to submit to your attention the following Memorial. The reasons which induce me to trouble you in this manner may be explained in a few words.—

During the course of four years, I had the honour of enjoying your confidence as Governor of Madras. At length it was determined in your Honourable Court that I had forfeited that confidence, and I was removed from my situation. My removal was effected in a manner calculated to make it peculiarly mortifying and disgraceful. It had been a courtesy usually practised on such occasions, to allow the superseded Governor at least the nominal possession of his office till the arrival of his successor, or till he could meet with an opportunity of embarking for England.

In my case a different course was pursued. It was ordered that I should immediately cease to be Governor; no measures were taken for my return home; and had it not been for the voluntary kindness of Sir Edward Pellew, I should have been obliged to remain in India, stripped of all authority, till the departure

of the homeward-bound Fleet had afforded me a passage. These circumstances are not trivial, because they would produce an impression unfavourable to my character, both on the public at home, and on the people over whom I had presided.

In the Dispatch which announced my removal, these words are used :

“ Though the zeal and integrity of our present Governor of Madras, Lord William Bentinck, are deserving of our approbation, yet, being of opinion that circumstances, which have recently come under our consideration, render it expedient for the interest of our service that a new arrangement of our Government of Fort St. George should take place without delay, we have felt ourselves under the necessity of determining that his Lordship should be removed.”

I was of course anxious to discover the circumstances here alluded to, and thought it no more than justice that I should receive the fullest information upon the subject. Under this impression I addressed a Letter to the Chairman, requesting a specific enumeration of the circumstances which entered into the contemplation of the Court at the period of their writing the words which have been quoted. The Chairman, however, declined a compliance with my request.

But it was not difficult to conjecture what would have been his reply, had he entered into the subject. The universal opinion, both in India and England, coincided with the most authentic private information, in representing the Mutiny at Vellore, with the subsequent commotions, as the real cause of my removal.

Such is the treatment which I have received, and such is its cause.

It is for you to judge, after a perusal of what I have to offer in my defence, whether that was a just cause, and consequently, whether I deserved such treat-

ment. If I have succeeded in the attempt to prove that I was in no degree responsible for the Mutiny at Vellore and the subsequent disturbances ; that I uniformly acted in the very spirit of your repeated orders and instructions to your Servants in India ; that, by a system of conciliation and tenderness towards the Native Prejudices, I allayed the tumults which I have been accused of injudiciously encouraging : I do presume to think that you will acknowledge the reasonableness of my complaints : and if they are reasonable, I am confident that your sense of justice will lead you to redress the injuries which I have suffered. What satisfaction may be due for injuries so deeply affecting my character and reputation, it will rest with you to determine.

I have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your obedient humble Servant,

WILLIAM CAVENDISH BENTINCK.

London, Feb. 7, 1809.

MEMORIAL,

&c. &c.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE COURT OF DIRECTORS, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

ON the first intelligence of the Mutiny at Vellore, the Court of Directors determined upon my removal from the Government of Madras. The sentence, however, was suspended till the arrival of further information; and the accounts of the later disturbances finally determined its instant execution. I was accordingly recalled; and was thus, of course, publicly declared, in a greater or less degree, responsible for the unfortunate occurrences which were known to have suggested the measure of my dismissal. It is the object of the following remarks to enquire whether the responsibility so fastened upon me had really been incurred; or, in other words, whether my recall was just.

The inquiry naturally resolves itself into three distinct considerations. It may have been thought expedient to dismiss me, either, in the first place, because I was concerned in the measures which *immediately* occasioned the Mutiny; or, secondly, because the general measures of the Government, over which I had the honour to preside, paved the way for that event; or, thirdly, because the measures which I advised in consequence of the Mutiny were unwise, and calculated rather to keep up than to allay the irritation of the public mind.

Each of these questions shall be separately examined.

In the prosecution of the first of these points of inquiry, it may be observed, that whatever difference of opinion the dispute respecting the more remote or primary causes of the Mutiny may have occasioned, there has always prevailed but one sentiment respecting the immediate causes of that event. These are, on all hands, admitted to have been certain military regulations, then recently introduced into the Madras army.

On this part of the subject, therefore, I shall, in the first place, state, briefly and simply, the nature of those regulations, and the effects which they produced down to the period of their final abolition.

In the second place, I shall examine how far I was myself implicated in the introduction or continuance of those regulations.

I. The military regulations alluded to have been introduced since the arrival of Sir J. Cradock at Madras; and the substance of them may be comprised in these particulars :

In ordering the Sepoys to appear on parade with their chins clean shaved, and the hair on the upper lip cut after the same pattern; and never to wear the distinguishing marks of cast, or ear-rings, when in uniform;—

In ordering, for the use of the Sepoys, a Turban of a new pattern;—

And in making them wear black stocks and white undress jackets.*

The alterations thus instituted seemed for a time to be received by the Sepoys with submission. The first symptoms of a contrary spirit betrayed themselves in the Second Battalion 4th Regiment N. I., which then composed part of the garrison of Vellore. On the 6th and 7th of May, 1806, the conduct of that Battalion, on occasion of their being ordered to wear the new Turban, was most disorderly, and even mutinous. It was only by severe measures that their Commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Darley, at last reduced them to obedience. The Commander in Chief immediately directed a Court of Inquiry to be held, “to examine into and report upon the causes which led to certain acts of insubordination in the Second Battalion 4th Regiment N. I.” He at the same time addressed, through the official channel of the Adjutant-General, a letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Fancourt, the Commanding Officer at Vellore.

This letter (a) is conceived in the highest tone of military authority. After stating the measures that had been taken to convey nineteen soldiers, who had been confined by Lieutenant-Colonel Darley as ringleaders in the Mutiny, to Madras, for the purpose of their being there tried, the Commander in Chief directs that the Non-commissioned Officers who had refused to wear the Turban should be reduced to the Ranks; and peremptorily insists on the immediate adoption of the new Turban by the disorderly Battalion. The concluding paragraphs are as follow :

“ You will further, through Lieutenant-Colonel Darley, direct the Native Commissioned Officers of the Second Battalion of the 4th Regiment N. I., immediately to make up and wear Turbans of the prescribed pattern.

“ Disobedience or hesitation on their part will be instantly followed by dismissal from the service, in public orders, on your report.

* A Mis-statement of the Facts.

“ Lieutenant-Colonel Kennedy has orders, should you require it, to march the 19th Dragoons to Vellore, to assist in enforcing obedience.

“ It is the intention of the Commander in Chief immediately to relieve the Second Battalion 4th Regiment N. I.; but, though he thinks proper to remove this Corps from Vellore, he will not admit of hesitation to the orders he has given.”

The Court of Inquiry, which, as I have already stated, had been appointed by the Commander in Chief to examine into the causes of the insubordination manifested by the disorderly Battalion, decidedly attributed, in their Report, the origin of the misconduct of the Battalion to “ the jealous and lively prejudices of the Natives, in any matter respecting dress (which, they observe, in this country is intimately connected with Cast and Religion), acting upon the weak minds of illiterate and uninformed men.”

In order to ascertain how far, according to the opinions of the strictest followers of the Native religious persuasions, the opposition to the Turban was sanctioned by the habits of thinking peculiar to the country, the Court proceeded to examine two persons of high Cast, the one a Malabar, and the other a Seid, particularly with respect to the Turban. The testimony (b) of these men pointedly went to discountenance the idea, that wearing the Turban was in itself inconsistent with the religious principles of the Natives, or could have any discernible tendency to shock their feelings. That the members of the Court themselves also regarded the Turban as in no wise interfering with the Religion or prejudices of the Natives, is clearly intimated in their Report; and more directly asserted in a private paper, presented by them to the Commander in Chief, and expressly treating on this particular point.

The nineteen men, who had been put under arrest by Lieutenant-Colonel Darley, were tried by a General Court Martial, consisting entirely of Native Officers, and were condemned to receive severe corporal punishment, and to be dismissed the Company's service. The greater part, however, of these offenders shewing strong signs of contrition, were forgiven by the Government, and the two ringleaders only received punishment. The words in which the sentence of the Court is expressed are particularly strong, and deserve to be inserted:

“ The Court doth therefore adjudge the said prisoners to receive nine hundred lashes each, with a cat-of-nine-tails, on their bare backs, at such time and places as his Excellency the Commander in Chief shall be pleased to direct; and furthermore, *to be discharged from the Honourable Company's service, as turbulent and unworthy subjects.*”

In this trial, two Native Officers of the highest Cast, both Hindoo and Mussulman, were examined with regard to the Turban; and their evidence (c) was no less decisive and satisfactory in its favour, than that which has been recently mentioned as given before the Committee of Inquiry.

The Proceedings of the respective Courts were submitted to Government, and accompanied by a letter from the Commander in Chief, and another from the Adjutant-General. These letters are alluded to in this place, only because they shew the impression made on the minds of the writers, by the late events, to have been, that the opposition to the Turban had no warrant in the general religious notions of the people; and that it was merely a momentary effort of insubordination, which a just degree of rigour was adequate to quell, and had in fact completely suppressed.

This impression corresponded with the general opinion, and was confirmed by many circumstances. The mutinous Battalion had arrived at Madras, had submitted to wear the new Turban, and was reported by its Commanding Officer to be "in as perfect and complete a state of subordination and good discipline as any other Corps on the Madras establishment." The sentence which, as has already been said, the Court Martial had passed against the more obnoxious of the ringleaders in the late irregular proceedings of that Battalion, was executed in front of the garrison.

On the 4th of July, a letter (*d*) was received by the Governor in Council, from Sir J. Cradock, desiring the advice of Government on the expediency of revoking the order respecting the Turban. The Commander in Chief, in this communication, represented his embarrassment with regard to the point in reference. He alluded to the many advantages, as to lightness and convenience, which the new Turban possessed over the old; but observed, that he had "the strongest reasons to suppose almost universal objection arose against the Turban;" that severity, if unsuccessful, might produce bad consequences; that, though deeply impressed with the general principle of enforcing obedience instead of yielding to opposition, he yet hesitated to apply that principle to so peculiar a people as the Natives of India; that, by intelligence from Seringapatam, and by a private letter from Colonel Brunton, he understood that both the Sepoys and Native Officers apprehended a design of converting them by force to Christianity; that "still it was his wish, and the best judgment he could apply to this untoward subject, to persevere and conquer prejudice, as perhaps the least evil;" but that he was not satisfied in his own mind to persevere to the full extent "without recurrence to the advice and sanction of Government."

In return (*d*) to this application, the Governor in Council stated, that he was induced, by the difficulty attending the proposed alteration in dress, to regret the first adoption of that measure; but the measure having been already adopted, he agreed with the Commander in Chief in thinking that its revocation might tend to compromise the authority by which it had been publicly put in force. He observed, that if the use of the new Turban militated against the religious principles of the Natives, there could be no hesitation as to the necessity of abandoning it: but that this, from the evidence taken in the late trials, appeared not to be the case. With a view, at the same time, of pacifying unreasonable apprehensions, he proposed the

publication, under the authority of Government, of a General Order to the Native Troops, containing the most positive assurances that no intention existed of “ introducing any change incompatible with the laws or usages of their Religion.” This step, it was conceived, might reconcile the soldiery to that plan of perseverance in the use of the Turban, which a regard to military discipline seemed to require.

Previously to the circulation of the proposed Order, a copy (*e*) of it was transmitted to the Commander in Chief for his approval.

The Commander in Chief, in reply (*f*), expressed his warmest approbation of “ the spirit and terms of the Order, as every way calculated to preserve just authority. “ and still to allay any prejudices that might exist upon the imputed disregard to the “ right attached to Cast or antient custom.” He gave it as his opinion, however, that the publication of the Order was no longer called for, and, from having heard nothing more since his last communication, was led to hope that “ the disinclination “ to the Turban was become more feeble, or perhaps that the reports had been exaggerated.” Under this view he thought that “ it might be judicious to postpone “ the publication of the Order, as the interposition of Government was no longer “ required.”

The Order accordingly was never published.

It should be noticed, that at this crisis the Government of Fort St. George was unapprised of the existence of any of the recent Regulations relating to Dress, excepting the Order for the new Turban.

On the 10th July, while Sir J. Cradock's last letter was on the road, the Mutiny at Vellore took place.

A few days after that event, the President stated (*g*) to the Board, that he had been very lately informed of some recent changes in the Dress of the Sepoys, distinct from the new Turban; and that the knowledge of this fact, united with the advices from Vellore, induced him to propose a resolution directing the immediate suspension of the late orders respecting the Turban, the marks of Cast, and ornaments of Dress. The resolution was passed, and transmitted to the Commander in Chief at Vellore: and a circular letter to the same tenor was in consequence addressed by him to the Commanding Officers of Divisions and the Commanders of the subsidiary Forces at Hyderabad and Travancore. In this circular letter, however, the Commander in Chief ordered the restoration of the old Turban only conditionally; leaving the Native Officers and Men the option of wearing the new one. To this clause the President objected (*h*), on many grounds; and it was unanimously agreed in Council, that the order for the restoration of the former Turban should be unqualified. The Commander in Chief acquiesced in this determination.

On the first intelligence of the Mutiny at Vellore, Government appointed a Commission for the purpose of investigating the causes of that event (*i*). The

members of the Commission were selected with peculiar care from the civil and military departments, and were directed to proceed immediately to Vellore. On the 9th of August they presented their Report (*j*) : the result of their investigation was, that the Orders respecting the Turban and the distinguishing marks of Cast had excited much alarm and dissatisfaction ; and that the emissaries of the Princes at Vellore had taken advantage of the temporary ferment to practise on the minds of the soldiery, and to seduce them from their allegiance. “The dissatisfaction,” it is observed by the Commission (*k*), “arose out of a religious prejudice, and was therefore the readier converted into a common cause.”

I am aware that this opinion materially differs from the sentiments expressed by a Military Committee of Inquiry, which had been appointed at Vellore by the Commander in Chief, on occasion of the Mutiny, and with a view of ascertaining its causes. The difference, however, as it does not relate to the *immediate* causes of the Mutiny, is not of such a kind as at all to affect that branch of the inquiry which is under present consideration. The existence of general apprehension in the Native Army on account of the late military arrangements, and the intrigues, more or less systematic, of the Moorish emissaries, are recognized in both the Reports ; but which of these was the primary, and which the second cause, is the point at issue between the two Committees.

Leaving undisturbed for the present the question relating to the comparative influence of the two circumstances just stated, it may be enough to repeat, that the late alterations in the uniform of the Army are universally acknowledged to have been at least the immediate occasion of the affair at Vellore.

II. Having now given a rapid view of the effects produced by those alterations, it remains to be inquired, in the second place, how far I am personally responsible for them.

In a slight degree, this question has been unavoidably anticipated in the foregoing pages ; but it requires to be fully and expressly considered. The plainest mode of proceeding will be, to examine separately each of the alterations that have been specified, and to give its history.

The Regulation relating to the marks of Cast, and the ear-rings and whiskers of the soldiers, perhaps claims the precedence. It is at least the only one that was regularly enacted by a military code.

Sir J. Cradock, on his arrival at Madras, found that there was no general code of military regulations for the army of that Presidency. In March 1805, he submitted a proposal to the Governor in Council, for the purpose of supplying this defect ; and the Deputy-Adjutant-General, Major Pierce, was, in consequence, appointed to reduce into a system the detached and floating orders by which the various regiments had, till

hattime, been governed. The Code, thus prepared, was, after receiving the approbation of the Commander in Chief, presented to the Board in January 1806, and finally published on the 13th of March of the same year.

It was the tenth paragraph of the 11th section of this Code, that ordained the important innovation now under review. It ran thus :

“ It is ordered by the Regulations, that a Native soldier shall not mark his face
 “ to denote his Cast, or wear ear-rings when dressed in uniform ; and it is further directed,
 “ rected, that at all parades, and upon all duties, every soldier of the battalion shall
 “ be clean shaved on the chin. It is directed also, that uniformity shall, as far as it is
 “ practicable, be preserved in regard to the quantity and shape of the hair upon the
 “ upper lip.”

At first sight, it may seem that Government, in permitting such a paragraph as the preceding to appear in a Code published under its eye, was culpable : but the fact is, that, though it be true (as stated by the Commander in Chief) that the Code of Military Regulations was published under the sanction of Government, it is equally true, that, till the explosion at Vellore, neither the Governor, nor any one of the Civil Members of Council, was aware (*l*) of the existence of that paragraph. The plain tale is this.—

Sir J. Cradock, in his proposal (*m*) for the formation of the Code, used these words :

“ The Commander in Chief has it only in contemplation to reduce into one view
 “ the several Orders *in force*, and which are *already sanctioned by Government* ;
 “ but should any slight alteration appear obviously necessary, or it be found requisite
 “ to introduce a few circumstances of discipline or interior œconomy of the later practice
 “ in England, *such new matter will be distinguished in the manuscript* that will
 “ be submitted for the final approbation of Government.”

In the minute which accompanied the Code when presented to Government, Sir J. Cradock says, “ The whole is comprised in twenty-seven sections alphabetically
 “ arranged ; and the *additional Orders, to which I request the attention of the Board,*
 “ *as requiring the sanction of Government,* are as follow.”

An enumeration of the additional Orders then succeeded.

The Orders comprised in this enumeration obviously formed the only part of the new Code to which it was the duty of Government to attend ; and this duty I conscientiously discharged. For it will not be contended, that we lay under any obligation to wade through the details of nearly one hundred and fifty folio sheets, consisting of Regimental Orders respecting Drill, Discipline, and Dress ; Orders too, already in force, already sanctioned by Government ; recently revised by professional judges ; and corrected, as far as they might need correction, by those very supplementary Regulations, to which my exclusive attention had been required and given.

The tenth paragraph, however, though in reality appearing now for the first time in any military Code, was inserted among the *old Orders*, which were represented in the gross as having already received every necessary ratification ; and, of course, it had no place in the list of those *additional Orders, to which, as requiring the sanction of Government*, the attention of the Board was requested by the Commander in Chief.

This omission was not perceived till the effects of the paragraph in question were felt ; and Government was then accused of having sanctioned an Order, of the very existence of which it was ignorant.

The Commander in Chief, when apprized of the omission of the tenth paragraph in the list of New Orders, referred (*n*) for an explanation of the circumstances to Major Pierce, to whom the task of arranging the New Orders in a separate class had been officially assigned. That officer's justification of himself may be found in the Appendix (*n*) ; but the fact is clear. The bare statement of it is, I presume to think, a complete exculpation of myself and my colleagues.

Let us now proceed to the other alterations which Sir J. Cradock thought it necessary to introduce into the Army.

As the Turban in common use among the Native Troops was, in a military point of view, liable to many solid objections, it was determined by the Commander in Chief, in November 1805, to adopt one of a new and improved pattern. The necessary orders were issued ; and in the month of April or May 1806, the new Turban arrived at Vellore.

Towards the close of the year 1805 also, it was ordered by the Commander in Chief, that the Sepoys should wear black stocks and white undress jackets.

It is almost superfluous to say, that in the introduction of these alterations I was in no degree implicated. Government was not in the slightest degree concerned in the Orders by which they were introduced ; nor consulted on the subject ; nor even aware of their being in contemplation. In truth, it was not the duty of the Commander in Chief to consult Government upon the petty details of his own department.

So far all is clear ; but, with respect to the Turban in particular, there is something further.

I am aware of a charge which may be brought against me, namely, that on occasion of the Commander in Chief's secret reference, on the subject of the new Turban, I did not advise the revocation of the Order enforcing its use.

The fact, which is the ground-work of this charge, is admitted. To set it, however, in its true light, a few words of comment will be necessary ; nor am I aware, that, in offering them, I shall be guilty of any digression from that particular path of inquiry which I have, in this place, proposed to myself. In estimating the weight of the remarks which I am about to submit to you, I have to demand of you one piece of justice : it is, that you will exclude from consideration any circumstances which, though

they may have since come to light, could not possibly have entered into human contemplation at the period to which the charge refers; and that my conduct may be tried only on those principles by which alone it could be regulated.

Let it be recollected, that at that time Government was ignorant of the existence of any new Regulations on Dress, excepting the Order respecting the Turban; and to this alone did the reference of the Commander in Chief allude. Now, with respect to this Order, both Government and the Commander in Chief were in fact committed, by the severe measures adopted towards the Mutineers of the 7th of May, and by the high tone publicly assumed on that occasion by the Commander in Chief, as set forth in the extracts from his Letters and Orders which I have before noticed. To recede from a lofty position, is at all times a dangerous compromise of authority; and no principle can be clearer than this, that a concession extorted by the mutinous efforts of an armed soldiery is generally fatal to military discipline. The Commander in Chief too, from the tenor of his letter, unequivocally leaned to the plan of persevering in the Order, and felt that his authority over the army might be impaired by a contrary resolution.

Whatever, therefore, might have been the opinion of Government on the simple question of the revocation, there was something beyond that question involved in the discussion of it at the moment. They were to decide, with a reference both to the troops to whom the Order had been issued, and who were at that time in a disposition to insubordination; and also to their Commander, who had issued the Order, and whose military authority was represented by himself as essentially implicated in its fate.

These considerations, it must be allowed, militated against the idea of a revocation; nor could they be overlooked, unless a case were made out on the opposite side strong enough to overbalance their weight.

In order to make out such a case, it was necessary to prove, either that, on the principles of the native Religions, the Turban was in itself calculated to excite dissatisfaction, or that the dissatisfaction stated to exist was general. Neither of these propositions, however, was proved; or, to speak more correctly, both of them were disproved.

As to the Turban, four Natives of the highest casts had solemnly deposed, that, in a religious view, it was completely unobjectionable. The opinion of the Native General Court Martial strongly corroborated that deposition.

As to the existence of general dissatisfaction, the authorities referred to by the Commander in Chief in his letter, were those of Lieutenant-Colonel Brunton, and another officer at Seringapatam. The name of the latter was not given. It was competent to Government to consider the weight to be attached to these authorities; and there was sufficient ground for regarding them both with distrust.

On the Report of Colonel Brunton we could lay no stress. We knew, that, till the 17th of the month in which he wrote, he had spent his life in a civil department at

the Presidency, and could therefore have no direct knowledge of the feelings of the Sepoys. We knew, also, that he had been for a long time in a deplorable state of health ; and that when he left the Presidency, his life was despaired of, and his mind and nerves were suffering under the greatest despondency. Sir J. Cradock, from being at that time in Mysore, could not have been aware of this material circumstance.

The intelligence from the officer at Seringapatam, whatever confidence the Commander in Chief might place in it, did not seem to us conclusive enough to decide an important point of conduct. In the first place, it was anonymous ; in the next, it stood almost alone ; and in the third, it was opposed by strong presumptive evidence. It was reasonable to conclude, that this intelligence could not have come from General Macdowell, the commanding officer in Mysore, because he would have communicated it, as it was his duty to do, officially, both to the Commander in Chief and to the Governor in Council. His silence therefore, which, under the circumstances supposed, would have been evidently culpable, threw a doubt over the whole representation. To this was added, the silence of the Resident at Mysore ; and Mysore, it should be remembered, was the very province in which the discontents were stated to exist to so alarming a degree. These presumptions were much strengthened by the general tranquillity which prevailed in the army. The Adjutant-General, who was left at the Presidency during the Commander in Chief's absence, for the express purpose of more immediately communicating with Government in all matters of importance, had received no intimation of dissatisfaction from any quarter, excepting that which has been mentioned. It was an important fact too, that the Turban was peaceably worn by one of the corps in Fort St. George, as well as by troops in other places.

The authorities, let it be observed, relied upon by the Commander in Chief, stated the existence of a general dissatisfaction, both in Mysore and in the country at large. I am now contending, not that there might not have been such dissatisfaction, but that there was no proof of it, nor even such an approach to proof as could have justified Government in acting upon the idea. I contend further, that the reasons against that idea were so strong, as to justify Government in refusing to act upon it ; and it is remarkable, that the impressions of Government on this subject afterwards received confirmation from the Commander in Chief himself, and from Lieutenant-General Macdowell, commanding in Mysore.

Lieutenant-General Macdowell, in a letter which was laid before Council by Sir J. Cradock, on the 20th of July, ten days after the mutiny at Vellore, reports the perfect tranquillity of the troops at Seringapatam, and expresses his belief that the dissaffection at Vellore was merely partial and local. It should be remarked, that the troops at Seringapatam were, at the date of that letter, still ignorant of the final abolition by Government of the Orders respecting the Turban and marks of Cast.

The Commander in Chief's opinion to the same point is clear from one simple fact, which has been already recited ; a fact which shows how completely he had changed his ideas, both as to the cause and extent of the supposed dissatisfaction, and how little reliance he subsequently placed on the authorities by which those ideas had been suggested.

This fact is, his declining to publish the conciliatory Order proposed by Government in reply to his secret reference ; and declining it on the express ground, that the state of the public mind was such as no longer to require any such interposition on the part of Government.

The result of these observations is, that there was no clear ground made out for the propriety of the revocation, especially in the face of those considerations which have been described as opposing that measure. The two positions, relating to the Turban and the general dissatisfaction, which could alone have warranted the revocation, were not established. The Turban was proved to be unobjectionable. The hesitation of Government to rely implicitly on the statements of general dissatisfaction, was justified at the time by strong reasons and the current of opposite testimony ; and completely justified afterwards by the recorded declarations and the conduct of the Commander in Chief and Lieutenant-General Macdowell.

In addition to this, let it be kept in mind, that Government did not think proper to continue the Order respecting the Turban, without guarding it by a specific explanation to the Natives, that " no intention existed of introducing any change incompatible " with the laws or usages of their Religion."

It may be added further, that when these discussions took place, there was very little suspicion of the contingencies involved in their issue. The wildest dreamer in politics could hardly have imagined that the question lay between the revocation and the mutiny. Experience has now unfortunately familiarized us with the notion of this alternative ; but to have acted at that time on the possibility of its occurrence, would, to say the least, have been thought unreasonable and preposterous.

The defence of Government indeed might have been safely rested on the single circumstance that the Commander in Chief desired their advice on this subject. Had the case been as clear then as events have since rendered it, he would most assuredly have made no such reference. Had the dissatisfaction, and its cause, been so proved as to leave no doubt on his mind, it may be presumed that he would not have scrupled to exercise what was strictly his right, and to revoke by his own authority what by his own authority he had established.

THE second of the questions into which the subject divided itself now claims your attention:—

How far may any political measures, adopted by the Madras Government, be supposed to have been instrumental in preparing the way for the insurrection at Vellore?

The insinuations under this head, whether public or private, which have been made against my character, turn, as far as I am able to collect, on the following points:

1. On some local arrangements at Vellore.
2. On some general regulations referring to the provinces of the Presidency at large.

With relation to each of these points, I shall beg leave, Gentlemen, to submit a few remarks; and I indulge the hope, that it may be in my power (without immoderately trespassing on your time and attention) to offer somewhat more than a justification of my conduct.

I. With the selection of Vellore, as a place of residence for the family of Tippoo Sultaun, I had no concern: it was the act of the preceding Government, and immediately followed the capture of Seringapatam. It was an act, however, in which I acquiesced, because I considered it as perfectly unobjectionable. As long as the Princes remained on the Peninsula, it was of little consequence in what precise part of that territory they might be placed. The power, whatever it may have been, which they possessed to injure the British authority, depended on other circumstances than that of local situation, and might have been exercised with nearly the same ease and success at Fort St. George, or on the Nerbudda, as at Vellore. They must, in every case, have formed the rallying point for the followers of their Religion. If we may suppose their designs to have been originally and systematically mischievous, any situation within certain limits would have afforded the same materials and capabilities for carrying them into execution. If, on the other hand, as I must believe, they remained in passive submission, till roused by extraordinary and unexpected occurrences, it is equally obvious that the vicinity of Mysore was in no degree connected with the cause or the effect of the Mutiny.

As for the other points of censure, — for the improper indulgence with which the Princes are said to have been treated, for the splendour of their establishment, the number of their retainers, the confluence of Mahomedans to Vellore, and the rapid increase of population in that town; — here also I hold myself to be responsible, because, although these arrangements were made previously to my arrival in Madras, I certainly approved of the principles upon which they were established, and gave a proof of my approval by persisting in the same system.

This question, however, is mere matter of opinion, or, rather, it is a question of degrees. With regard to the Princes, the British Government had other objects to pursue, than that of simply crippling their power — an object which would best have been attained by at once taking their lives. It was further necessary to sustain that high character for lenity and forbearance which the Company has gained, and in which, indeed, no less than its reputation for vigour and military prowess, its ultimate safety is essentially involved. An offence against humanity would have been an offence both against our fame and our interests.

If the Government of Fort St. George failed of attaining that happy medium, that conduct at once vigilant and humane, which the circumstances of the case enjoined, its proceedings were then as much open to observation as they are at the present hour; and the objection made to them, I need hardly say, would have been better timed had it preceded instead of awaiting the event. In this, indeed, as in every other particular, I should be justified in deprecating all *ex post facto* criticisms on my measures. But, waving the exercise of this right, I am even now by no means aware that the public arrangements relating to the Princes, gave to them, in any essential respect, more than was strictly due both to their birth and misfortunes, and to the spirit of the agreement under which they originally surrendered themselves: nor, to say the truth, can I divine on what principles any arrangements materially different could have been vindicated. That a more rigorous treatment of them, irritating as it must have been both to themselves and to their well-wishers, would in any degree have diminished the chances of a Moorish conspiracy, appears to me matter of serious doubt.

In whatever part of the Peninsula the Princes might have been placed, they would, as I have observed, have naturally attracted around them a considerable number of their former subjects and adherents. If the size of the common household establishment of an Eastern Nobleman be considered, it will not appear extraordinary that the establishments of so many Princes, including their respective zenanas and attendants, together with the zenanas of Hyder and Tippoo, should very sensibly affect the population of Vellore.

This consequence was foreseen, and precautions were carefully taken to guard against its possible dangers; but it could not have been prevented without recourse to violence and cruelty. To have thinned, in any great degree, the personal retinue of

the Princes, would have been, according to the scale of Eastern manners, to punish them with solitary confinement.

It should not be overlooked, that, at the time of the Mutiny, the family of Tippoo had resided in Vellore for more than six years; and, during that period, not even an attempt had been made to debauch the minds of the soldiery. The fidelity of the Sepoys has been too well proved to be lightly shaken or impeached; and the same causes, totally independent of the dethroned family, would in any quarter of the world have produced the same effects as at Vellore.

After all that has been attributed to the influence of the Princes in that unfortunate transaction, it is curious to remark the little connection which it really had with any of the Sultaun's family. Of twelve sons, of many sons-in-law, uncles, and old ministers, and servants of the family, together with many hundred women, it has been ascertained that two alone of the Princes were in any degree concerned with the Mutiny. Of these two, it is ascertained that only one, with his dependents, was active in fomenting the discontents previously to the 9th of July: the other was certainly privy to the plot; but it does not appear that he actively interfered till it broke out. The rest had no knowledge of the designs of Rebellion, nor any participation in their progress. Their interest, indeed, would have sufficiently warned them to oppose any such project; for, in case of its success, they would unquestionably have fallen the first victims to the ambition of the victorious Prince. Of the certainty of this fate they must have been fully aware.

It must also be observed of the ringleader, that his general character was that of a weak, foolish young man, destitute of talents and respectability: he possessed, consequently, no influence over the rest of his family. That the plan of a Revolution should be committed to such hands, sufficiently proves its hopelessness and absurdity.

Much influence has been ascribed to the division of command at Vellore. The Command of the Fort was entrusted to one Officer, the Police of the Pettah to another, and the Paymastership of Stipends, or the immediate care of the families, to a third. The responsibility, it has been supposed, by being thus distributed, was weakened; and the task of sounding the alarm being affixed to no definite quarter, was left to chance.

The arrangement in question I always thought, in some respects, objectionable, because it seemed to me that the personal charge of the Princes, and the controul over their servants who lived in the Pettah, ought naturally to be vested in the same Officer. In order, however, to attain this object, it would have been necessary to make Vellore an exception to the general rule; and to commit the charge of the Police, not, as was the usual system, to the Civil Magistrate, but to the Paymaster of Stipends. An alteration of this nature could be effected only by a judicial Regulation; such a Regu-

lation had, in fact, been framed and enacted by the Madras Government before the Mutiny, and was, at the very period of the occurrence of that event, actually under reference to Bengal for the sanction of the Supreme Authority. So far, then, I may admit the system not to have been unexceptionable; but whether, in the particular instance before us, it was productive of any practical inconvenience, is a distinct consideration. I can honestly say, that I believe it was not. There were three distinct departments: the functions of the Officers respectively at the head of each, were definite, and clearly ascertained. A division of commands, let it be recollected, does not necessarily imply a confusion of commands; and yet, without such an implication, how does an animadversion on that circumstance bear upon the present subject? If, indeed, the several Commanding Officers were so foolishly and criminally delicate as to neglect their respective provinces, from the dread of trespassing on those of their neighbours, the responsibility rests with them personally, and not with the system which they perverted. But it is satisfactory to find, that from every such charge they have been acquitted by the Court of Inquiry held at Vellore. Insisting strongly on these considerations, I must also assert, that I adopted the arrangement in question, not because it was abstractedly the best, but because it was the best of which circumstances would admit. My reasons were simply these:

Lieutenant-Colonel Marriott had, from the first formation of the establishment, been Deputy-Paymaster of Stipends. In that situation he had given great satisfaction both to my predecessor and to myself. For this delicate charge he was peculiarly qualified by his skill in the Native languages, by his popularity with the Natives in general, and especially by the regard which all the members of the Sultaun's family, with an unanimity the more remarkable because observed on no other occasion, felt and testified towards his person. He had now succeeded to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, which was considered as incompatible to be held with the inferior appointment. I therefore determined, upon occasion of a vacancy in the command, to separate the different duties, which had been for some time past in fact, though not in theory, distinctly executed. In consequence, I recommended that the military duties of the Fort should be entrusted to the Commanding Officer, and the civil and political duties to the Paymaster of Stipends.

It is also essential to remark, that the Bengal Government, informing the arrangements respecting the confinement of the Princes at Calcutta, separated the Command of the Fort from the Paymastership of Stipends. Thus did that Government voluntarily adopt the very principle of a division of commands, which is now discovered to have been so fatal at Vellore; and adopt it, too, even after the evils which were attributed to its influence had occurred. It is enough to mention this fact.

I cannot quit this part of the subject, without adverting to another topic—namely, the want of vigilance which the ignorance of the conspiracy is supposed to

argue on the part of Government. Nothing is so easy as to bring forward charges of this kind after the occurrence of the event gives them some colour; and nothing, at the same time, is more unjust. I must here, therefore, once more insist on the right of being judged on those grounds only on which alone I could possibly act.

The whole charge amounts to this, that Government was not suspicious, where they had no reason to suspect. The nature of the discontents which issued in the conspiracy was such, as to close all the ordinary channels of communication; for, on a question of Religion, secrecy is a matter of conscience with every Native. Government also, as it has been shewn, knew nothing of the publication of the most objectionable among the Military Orders, and therefore could not possibly apprehend any consequent dissatisfaction in the public mind. The Order respecting the Turban, indeed, was the only one of whose existence it was apprised; and, on the tendency of that Order, every inquiry had been made which could satisfy the most rigid and timorous prudence. No evidence could be more decisive on this subject than that which was given before the Military Commission assembled at Vellore in May 1806, by two Native Officers of high Rank and Cast. The opinion of Kurrupah, Havildar Major, and a Malabar, is couched in these words: "There is no objection at all to the Turban; nor will the wearing of it, to the best of my opinion, degrade a man of the highest Cast, nor will it affect the prejudices of Cast." Meer Gholaum Ally, Jemadar and Native Adjutant, is no less decided: "I think that any Cast man might wear it without degradation, and that there is nothing about it to prejudice the Cast of any one." A Native General Court Martial also examined two Native Officers: Subadar Sheik Emaum declared there was nothing in the Turban to affect the most strict prejudices of Religion. The Jemadar Chaing Sing, who was a Brahmin, in reply to the question, "Whether, in his opinion, there was any thing about the new Turban, either in shape or materials, that could affect the prejudices of the highest and most tenacious Cast?" answered, "No; any Cast might wear it."

I here quote this evidence, to which I have referred on a former occasion, merely to shew how completely it was calculated to satisfy all alarms respecting popular discontent on the only point on which Government could possibly suspect such discontent might exist: for, in all other respects, the circumstances and disposition of the people under the Madras Government had recently experienced a sensible and most gratifying change; and the advancement of order, loyalty, and happiness, throughout those territories, had been emphatically remarked in a late dispatch from the Supreme Government. It is difficult for those who have not resided in India, to conceive the unbounded confidence which Europeans of all descriptions are accustomed to repose in their native dependants. This is, indeed, no reason for carelessness; but it certainly is a reason against lightly admitting suspicions, being

always on the watch to discover alarming symptoms before they exist, and thus producing the very dangers which it was intended to avert.

I have never heard that the ignorance of the Administration of this Country respecting the Mutiny of the Fleet in 1797, was charged upon them as a crime, though party dissensions were at that period at the greatest height.

The conspiracy at Vellore bore some analogy to that which has been just mentioned in several particulars, but in none more strikingly than the impenetrable secrecy in which it was muffled up till the moment of explosion. None of the Officers of the Sepoy Battalions, on the spot, were aware of its existence; it could scarcely then be expected to have reached the knowledge of Government, at the distance of eighty miles. The acquisition of such intelligence may indeed be pronounced to have been morally impossible; because it is evident, that, from the peculiar circumstances of the case, every channel of information, whether European or Native, was entirely closed.

II. From these inferior arrangements it is now time to turn to others of a more public and important nature. Some Regulations, passed by the Madras Government during the time of my Administration, have been charged with the effect of exciting discontent among the people at large. The principal document in which these accusations are recorded, is a Minute of the Commander in Chief, dated the 21st of September, 1806 (*o*). To that Minute, therefore, and particularly to the remarks on the state of the country with which it concludes, I must request your attention.

You will observe, Gentlemen, that, in the very commencement of these remarks, the Commander in Chief declares, that “as a stranger, he cannot feel himself competent to deliver opinions from himself;” and professes only to state the prevailing sentiments of others, “the most moderate and most experienced in the society of the “Presidency.”

It hence appears, that the remarks, on which I am about to comment, cannot be considered as bearing the full authority of that respectable name, under the sanction of which they are thus circulated. The censures which they insinuate, and the political views which they suggest on Indian affairs, are avowedly derived from persons that remain anonymous. Of this circumstance, however, I do not purpose to avail myself in the reflections which I shall offer.

But I must be allowed to regret, that the Commander in Chief was not more fortunate in the choice of his authorities, or more attentive to correct the palpable misrepresentations with which, I am compelled to observe, they abused his confidence. This is strong language; but to prove that it is strictly warranted, it is only necessary to ask, what would be the impression of statements like the following on the mind of an uninformed reader? —

He is told, that "the condition of the people is not so happy as it was;" that "their own arrangements, and their own institutions, pleased them better than our Regulations;" that "the introduction of all our systems alarms and annoys them, and they view them only as preparatory to greater innovation, which may extend to every circumstance that surrounds them;" that "the treasures of the State are expended on judicial establishments throughout countries, without distinction, where even military force at times is unable to preserve subjection." It is added, that "the inhabitants of this country do not comprehend the convulsion at present before their eyes," that, "within their shortest remembrance, military establishment and convulsion attracted all their attention;" that "at present, in the place of the old experienced Officer, to whom they have long looked up with respect, they see his power and ascendancy passed away, and the youthful inexperienced Judge, or boyish Collector, occupy all and more than his former place." It is further observed, that, though such institutions are suited to England, in India "it is visionary to order all things to be the same;" and lastly, that "the people of India must be left to find happiness in their own way, and our attention directed to the security of our own singular situation, and the general advantage of the State."

These representations might almost seem to warrant the notion, that we had studiously violated all the prejudices and customs of the Natives; that we had forced upon them the whole of our municipal code; that they were at this moment borne down by the weight of past and the dread of future innovations; that, till a late period, the Peninsula was almost wholly governed by martial law; and, finally, that the secret of a people finding happiness in their own way, consisted in having the laws administered at the point of the bayonet.

So far as I have been able to learn, both from the hints in the Minute alluded to, and also from the conversation of military men, it seems clear that the passages in question chiefly bear upon the introduction of the Judicial system into the Peninsula. The fate of any invectives on this subject I might safely leave to the judgment and information of those whom I have the honour to address; but such an accusation is too flattering to be lightly dismissed. Allow me, therefore, to retrace, in your presence, some (*p*) of the measures which have been thus severely censured; and to indulge myself with a recollection of the part, however humble, which I acted towards the extension of that system of justice which secures the rights and happiness of your Eastern subjects.

It should be remembered, that, with regard to the fundamental laws of our Indian territories, no alteration has at any time been even attempted. In all essential particulars, they remain precisely as we found them. At the period of our arrival in India, the Hindoos, in Civil matters, were judged by the Shaster, and the Mahomedans by the Koran; and in criminal cases, the Mahomedan Code formed the sole standard of

judgment both for Hindoos and Mussulmen. In this arrangement we have more than acquiesced ; we have ensured its continuance by specific Regulations. In the Criminal department, indeed, some inferior alterations have been found necessary, particularly with respect to the palliations and punishment of murder ; but these were absolutely indispensable, and are so few as not at all to affect the general correctness of this statement.

But these alterations, and the arrangements with which they are connected, are perfectly independent of what is called the Judicial system. That system neither applies, nor was meant to apply, to the laws themselves, but respects exclusively their administration and efficacy.

It is well known that the year 1793 forms a memorable æra in the annals of Bengal. It matured and carried into effect the Regulations which have rendered the name of Lord Cornwallis no less dear to the Natives, than his victories and virtues have made it sacred and formidable. Those Regulations affected chiefly the collection of the revenues, and the administration of justice ; two branches of public service, which, though separated by clear and radical distinctions, have, under despotic governments, been invariably united, not to say identified. On our arrival in India, we found them thus identified, and thus we long allowed them to remain, because it was not our object to interfere with the internal œconomy of the country. In process of time, however, the course of events carried us almost insensibly to assume a more active cognizance over the domestic polity of our oppressed and wretched subjects ; but, as the gradations by which we arrived at that point were, to ourselves at least, imperceptible, the idea of a radical change, the only possible corrective for the existing evils, was at no one period fairly suggested to our consideration. The principle, therefore, of combining the financial and judicial functions, was passively admitted into all our plans, and completely succeeded in thwarting their efficacy. In vain did the Company, through a series of years, exhaust its invention in attempts to modify the system, and to alleviate the miseries of the people : the original error was still retained ; the people were still miserable, and new methods were yet to be tried.

Of these, the system which was adopted in 1772 subsisted, with some improvements, till the period of Lord Cornwallis's administration. This system, however, though in many respects superior to those that preceded it, was yet liable to the same incurable objection. The Company assumed the dewanny functions ; that is, took upon itself, by the immediate agency of its servants, the care and collection of the revenues. The Governor in Council was at once invested with legislative, judicial, and executive powers ; and the same triple character seems to have flowed down through all the inferior agents. The Collector of the Revenues of a province was also the Magistrate of that province, and the Superintendant of the provincial Criminal Court, and Judge of the Civil Court for the trial of Revenue causes. The amount of the taxes was not fixed.

An annual assessment was formed, founded on actual investigations into the extent of cultivation, and the value of the crops : investigations very imperfectly made, and therefore generally leading to results extremely unequal and unjust. The oppressions, vexations, and cruelties, which must have attended this inquisitorial process, may be conceived. Nor were the Revenues more easily realized than justly assessed : there was always a large balance, and the actual collections were not made without violence, and in frequent instances not without torture.

Under these horrors, the landholder or inferior tenant had no resource ; and even the attempt to obtain redress was harassing in the extreme. The proper Revenue Court always accompanying the person of the Collector, not only could not be stationary, but had not even any fixed law of movement. Supposing, however, the plaintiff so fortunate as to reach it, he found that his oppressor, or the patron of his oppressor, was his judge. If, in spite of the delay and distance and expence, he chose to appeal from this to a higher jurisdiction, he then encountered the superintendence of the Board of Revenue, who might well be supposed not completely disinterested. If, after all his perils, he retained sufficient perseverance and hardihood to address the Supreme Tribunal, there his final sentence was to be pronounced by the ultimate defendant in all this process, the Governor in Council. Such were the great and complicated impediments that attended the administration of Civil justice.

It is not necessary to follow the various shiftings and changes of the Criminal courts during this period ; suffice it to say, that they were in general in the hands of Natives, subject to English controul ; and that the Presidency of the Supreme Court of Appeal was vested in the Nabob, who delegated the exercise of his functions to a Mussulman representative. This officer, who was in fact Supreme Judge, filled the inferior courts with his creatures ; and thus was this most important of all public departments made an engine of mischief, and rendered infamous, in every stage, for the grossest corruption, tyranny, and injustice.

At length Lord Cornwallis arrived, and another order of things began. The celebrated Regulations appeared in 1793, and by their influence the administration of justice, through all its channels, was purified. They severed the judicial from the financial department. The Collector was no longer a Judge, and his Court was abolished. The Nabob resigned to the British the long-abused prerogative of presiding in the Supreme Court of Criminal Judicature. A new series of Courts was established ; Courts legitimately organized, judiciously distributed through the country, with a view to promptitude either of redress or punishment, and leading, by simple degrees, to the tribunals of ultimate appeal. Civil causes were referred in the first instance to the Courts respectively stationed in the several districts ; in the second, to the provincial Courts of Appeal ; and lastly, to the Supreme Court established in Calcutta. In Criminal affairs, an appeal was open from the jurisdiction of the Magistrate in each dis-

trict to the Courts of Circuit, and thence to the Supreme Criminal Court, also established in Calcutta. The two Supreme Courts were composed of covenanted Civil servants of the Company, of long standing and experience *. The Judges in the inferior Courts also were covenanted Civil servants, exclusively devoted to this duty, and placed above the reach of temptation to abuse their trust. The amount of the revenues was at the same time ascertained according to an irrevocable assessment, and the inhuman practices before resorted to for their collection were banished for ever. In order to secure these great objects of humanity and wisdom, the cognizance of the Courts of Justice was extended to the conduct of the Revenue Officers, even in their official capacity, and Government was no longer allowed to arrogate a vigour beyond the law.

This system has realized the warmest hopes of its authors. Its blessings have been successively diffused over a larger sphere of action by Lord Teignmouth and Lord Wellesley; and the latter of these distinguished personages has recorded his opinion of its nature and effects in the following eulogy:

“ Subject to the common imperfection of every human institution, this system of laws is approved by practical experience (the surest test of human legislation), and contains an active principle of continual revision, which affords the best security for progressive amendment. It is not the effusion of vain theory, issuing from speculative principles, and directed to visionary objects of impracticable perfection; but the solid work of plain, deliberate, practical benevolence, the legitimate offspring of genuine wisdom and pure virtue. The excellence of the general spirit of these laws is attested by the noblest proof of just, wise, and honest government; by the restoration of happiness, tranquillity, and security, to an oppressed and suffering people; and by the revival of agriculture, commerce, manufacture, and general opulence, in a declining and impoverished country.”

The advantages of this system were, however, previously to the year 1802, confined to one Presidency; and the exposition which has been given of the former state of Bengal was still applicable to the territories immediately subject to the Presidency of Fort St. George. Here, the same causes produced the same evils; The same confusion of functions—the same oppression—the same uncertainty—the same wretchedness. A sufficient judgment of the general condition of the country may be formed from the instance of Tanjore, which in the year 1804 offered a striking picture of the universal speculations and oppressions carried on by the servants of the Collectors. The Court of Directors were so impressed with the enormity of these evils, that they instantly ordered the establishment of the Courts of Justice in that province.

Under the government of my immediate predecessor, the Courts had, in the Peninsula, been introduced into a few provinces which had been permanently settled; that is, in which the revenues were fixed by an unchangeable assessment. Into the

* According to the original plan, the two Supreme Courts were composed of the Governor and Council. The present arrangement was introduced by Lord Wellesley.

rest of the country, which was not yet settled, it was not intended to introduce the Judicial system, till the permanent settlement should have taken place. This delay appeared to me unnecessary, and I had the merit (if it be any merit to follow a good example) of obtaining the consent of the Supreme Government to the immediate and general introduction of the system in question. It fell to my lot, accordingly, to be the instrument of extending the influence of those Regulations, the principal features of which I have already traced; and their effects in the Madras territories, as far as they have been tried, might be described exactly in the language which Lord Wellesley has applied to their operation in Bengal.

But the people, it is said, are better pleased with their own arrangements and institutions, than with our Regulations.

To what arrangements and institutions of that people this assertion alludes, it may be curious to inquire. Is it to the arrangements established by the Mahomedan Government prior to our conquests, or to those established by our Government prior to 1802? It is scarcely possible to conceive that the former can be intended; for no man ever dreamed for a moment of instituting a comparison between the most depraved exertions of our authority, and the proverbial rapacity and corruption of Mahomedan administration. If, on the other hand, the successive institutions of the English be alluded to; in the first place, it is not easy to guess by what figure of speech the people of India can be complimented with any more property in *them* than in the late Regulations; and in the next, it will not be denied that the late Regulations are better calculated than any of their predecessors of British introduction, to attain all the legitimate ends of Government. How, under these circumstances, the Indians can feel the preference which is attributed to them, I am at a loss to divine.

The most plausible objection, however, which has been brought forward against these Regulations, is, that "in India, where nothing is alike, it seems visionary to order every thing to be the same."

These words must of course refer to the Native population of India; and if the Regulations had in the slightest degree touched the Manners, the Habits, Casts, Religious Prejudices, or even the Dress and Ornaments of the Natives, if they had attempted to establish uniformity of any kind among our various subjects, the objection would have been just; but if any thing be incontrovertible, it is, that they have left these points totally unmolested. With the domestic or internal relations of the people, they have no direct connection.

They affect chiefly what may be termed the international policies of Britain and India. They are calculated to controul rather the governors than the subjects, and strike upon the latter principally through the improved conduct and corrected principles of the former. They create neither new rights nor new duties, but enforce the practice of acknowledged duties, and provide against the abuse of existing rights. They inculcate on the superiors the uniform practice of justice; and from the inferiors

they require, what it seems no tyranny to require, allegiance, and a fixed and reasonable contribution to the public expenditure. These surely are rights and duties applicable to all places, all times, all customs, and all degrees of civilization.

If, by certain hints that have been thrown out, it be meant to imply that this pacific process is insufficient for the purpose of realizing the public revenue, let it be proved that a defalcation of the Revenue has, in point of fact, been the consequence of its adoption. But, even if this were the case, and if it were found impossible to collect the taxes without an armed force, that resource, let it be remembered, is not finally cut off by a previous resort to the unarmed authority of the law; and I am not aware that any advantage is lost by making the appeal to the bayonet in the last instance rather than in the first.

Whatever, therefore, may be thought of "ordering all things to be the same" among the Natives, it may be hoped that the project of enforcing on the Company's servants an uniformity of just, mild, and conciliatory conduct, will not appear altogether "visionary." We acquire no right to rule oppressively, by ruling those whom we choose to style uncivilized; nor does it follow, that because the subjects are Barbarians, the Government should be barbarous. There is, indeed, no engine of civilization more powerful than the equitable administration of wise laws. To defer the employment of it, then, till the people are happy and civilized enough for its reception, is something like adjourning the application of a remedy till the disease shall have cured itself.

The subject of Military interference recalls to my attention a particular passage in the Commander in Chief's Minute:

"The inhabitants of this Country understood and felt its origin (the origin of Military establishment and controul) as congenial to their own notion of authority. At present, they view a different order of things; and, in the place of the old experienced Officer, to whom they have long looked up with respect, they see his power and ascendancy passed away, and the youthful and inexperienced Judge, or boyish Collector, occupy all and more than his former place."

It is probable that the Commander in Chief alludes, in this place, to the effect of the Judicial system, in making the Sepoys amenable for crimes and misdemeanours committed as subjects, to the regularly constituted Civil and Criminal Courts. Before this change, they were amenable to no tribunal but that of their Officers. The bare mention of such an arrangement is surely sufficient to expose its radical evils, and at the same time perhaps to account for the outcry which has been raised against its supercession. Precisely the same outcry was excited in Bengal, when Lord Cornwallis put an end, in the army of that Presidency, to the same pernicious system.

From the tenor of the passage, however, which has been quoted, it could not fail to be imagined, that by the former system the old and experienced Officer was, in

some manner, concerned in the Civil or Judicial department in general; and, that, according to the present, he has been supplanted by the Judge and the Collector. But the direct reverse of this representation was notoriously the case. With the exception of that jurisdiction already mentioned, which they were allowed over the Sepoys, Officers holding Military Commands were, as a general rule, excluded from all political authority. The Civil power was exclusively lodged in the Collector. In what sense, then, was the situation of Military men affected by the change of system? This question can admit only of one solution.

Though the Officers were not invested with the Civil or Judicial functions, they frequently assumed to themselves the privilege of exercising an illegal, and therefore often oppressive, authority over the Natives. The Records of Government abundantly prove this fact. In the midst of a people inured to slavery, habitually conscious of British superiority, and constitutionally timid, it was not difficult to convert the natural ascendancy of Military power into something like an organized despotism. There can, I believe, be no doubt, that in some cases the Military Commanders levied taxes, interfered with private property, and ordered summary trials and punishments upon persons unconnected with the camp or cantonment. It is justly observed, that this conduct was well understood. Nothing, in truth, could be more intelligible: nothing better calculated to excite that species of respect which we vulgarly call by the name of Fear. It was owing partly to the effect of this feeling, partly to the distance of the seat of Government, and partly to the habits of the Natives, that few complaints reached the Presidency. The Collectors connived at these proceedings, because they also, in their turn, stood in need of connivance. A sympathy of interests taught the Civil and Military authorities the necessity of mutual indulgence; and, under shelter of this confederacy, the most questionable transactions escaped detection.

To such practices the new Regulations gave a fatal blow; but to complain of this circumstance as a hardship upon the Army, conveys a sort of compliment which I should certainly never have thought of paying to that distinguished class of my countrymen. I am convinced, that as to legitimate influence, as to honest ascendancy of profession or conduct, the Officers of the Army have lost nothing. In these particulars, on the contrary, they are gainers, both by being led individually to look for respect where alone it ought to be found, and by being elevated with the general elevation of the British character.

Independently, however, of the merits of the system, another charge has been brought forward, respecting the youth and inexperience of those who were entrusted with the management of it. I have no hesitation to acknowledge, that many who were selected for that purpose were not so mature as I could have wished; and I always regretted this defect, not from any personal objections on the ground of

inexperience to those who were chosen, but merely upon general principles. But it was a matter of necessity. In consequence of particular circumstances, which are detailed in the Appendix, the field of choice was extremely limited. It was no less my interest than my duty to ensure, by the appointment of proper agents, the success of a plan, for the introduction of which I was responsible; and I can truly affirm, that on no one occasion in my life have I acted with greater deliberation or a more resolute impartiality. I patiently collected the opinions of the best judges; I obtained five or six lists of the most eligible members of the establishment; and upon these data I formed my final judgment. It is no more than justice to the Gentlemen who were appointed to add, that, as far as they have been tried, their conduct has in general given satisfaction to the Supreme Court.

In short, in order to substantiate this charge, one of the two following positions must be proved; and I pledge myself that they are both incapable of proof:—it must be proved, either that I did not make the best choice, which, under existing circumstances, I might have made; or that the new system, under whatever disadvantages, has not practically been more beneficial than that which it succeeded.

I cannot conclude this branch of the subject without observing, that the objections which have been made against the introduction of the Judicial system into the Peninsula, might, with equal justice, have opposed its original establishment and subsequent extension in Bengal. It might, with as much plausibility, have been urged, that this was a frightful convulsion; that the Natives preferred their own Institutions to our Regulations; that the civilization and felicity of India were not adequate to the reception of such blessings; that in such an immense territory of unequal civilization, it was visionary to order all things to be the same; that the old respectable Military Officer was superseded by striplings; and, in a word, that we should let our subjects take care of themselves, and look only at our own singular situation.

If such suggestions had been made, or effectually made, at that period, what would have been the present state of India?

But if, after all, this were a matter of doubtful issue, and a question not of reason and experiment, but of mere authority, it might, I think, be settled for ever, by an appeal to the great names with which it is associated, to many eminent private opinions, to the recorded approbation of successive Councils in Madras and Bengal, and to the public sanction of the Court of Directors.

Having thus, as I trust, proved that the Judicial Regulations were not calculated to excite any apprehension or discontent, I am yet bound to admit the statement of a general disaffection, not only among the soldiery, but also among the people at large.

That this disaffection was occasioned by the Regulations which I have just detailed, I take upon myself to deny; because there is no reason whatever for such an

opinion, and there are many reasons for the contrary supposition. I rather attribute its origin to alarms of a religious nature. However absurd it might be in the Natives of India, I will not say to *admit* the idea that their Religion was in danger (for the Military Orders certainly afforded but too just a foundation for many serious fears), but to *indulge* it for any length of time, there can be no doubt that such an idea had obtained possession of the public mind. This fact being ascertained, the whole mystery is unravelled, and all research into the cause of the late commotions at an end. Those whom a residence in India has qualified to judge of the subject, will perceive in this circumstance more than an adequate explanation of all that has happened. To those who have not had that advantage, it would scarcely be possible for any language to convey a sufficient conception of the sensibilities of the Natives on the subject of Religion.

THE third branch of our inquiry relates to the policy of the measures which were adopted by Government in consequence of the Mutiny at Vellore. The effect of those measures, it is asserted, was to keep up the spirit of discontent and rebellion, which it required only a strict execution of justice completely to suppress.

In order to facilitate the examination of this question, it will be necessary to lay before you a brief detail of some transactions which followed the Mutiny. Such a detail will afford a full illustration of the conduct of Government.

It will be proper to begin with observing, that although, from the time of the Mutiny, the causes of that event were universally admitted to have been the recent Military Regulations, and the intrigues of the Moorish emissaries; yet, with respect to the order and degree in which those causes operated, there always prevailed both in Council and among the public two opposite opinions.

It was maintained, on the one side, that the military innovations, as they certainly formed the immediate, formed also the primary and essential cause of the Insurrection. The Mussulmen at Vellore could not, it is true, be supposed to regard with indifference the reverse of fortune which they had experienced. Their wishes and regrets, no doubt, constantly recurred to their former greatness, among the ruins of which they were now leading a humbled and irksome life. A feeling, therefore, existed among them, which might indeed be ready to come into action when incited by a favourable crisis, but which, if prudently managed, and allowed no opportunity to break out, might also in process of time be worn away, or even extinguished. To that feeling the discontents of the army unfortunately supplied at the same time the opportunity and the incentive of exertion. Then, and not till then, did the emissaries of the Moorish interest at Vellore enter into intrigues with the soldiery, and thus foment the Mutiny. The issue of that attempt rather served to revive than extinguish hope; because, as is usual in such cases, the malcontents were more encouraged by its having so nearly succeeded, than depressed by its having ultimately failed. It might perhaps be allowed, that, from this period, the Mussulmen in different divisions of the army were led, in a greater or less degree, by the same events, to indulge in the same criminal practices. But these, it was asserted, were occurrences of a partial and local nature, the result, not of a regular and preconcerted system, but solely of a fortuitous concurrence of circumstances.

Such were the sentiments of the majority both of the Members of Council and of the inhabitants of India ; and in these sentiments I was led by the fullest conviction of their justice to coincide.

On the other hand, however, it was maintained, that the Mussulmen had formed, previously to any suspicions on our part, a deep and widely extended Conspiracy, with the express object of re-establishing the dominion of the Moors on the ruins of the British power ; that this Conspiracy was rapidly maturing, when the temporary irritation in the Army offered to the Conspirators an occasion of hastening the explosion, which must at any rate have soon taken place ; that, after the massacre, the same projects were pursued with increased ardour and assiduity ; and that plots the most dangerous and desperate extended, by a regular chain of communication, from one end of the Peninsula to the other.

This opinion was strenuously supported by the Commander in Chief, and by a considerable part of the Army.

It is obvious, that a difference so complete as that which has been just stated, on a point of so fundamental a nature, could not fail to produce important practical effects. There could hardly be any compromise, either between the two opposite opinions, or between the measures to which they respectively led.

If the Mutiny originated in the honest, though misguided, workings of religious zeal, alarmed into action by some particular and detached measure on the part of the ruling power, that measure might be immediately abandoned, and the alarm might be expected to subside of course. The exercise of clemency would then become safe for us ; and it would be our wisest policy, as well as our bounden duty, to soothe and to forgive.

If, on the other hand, the impatience of the Moors under the revolutions which had humbled their Native Princes, formed the ground-work of the Rebellion, measures of indulgence were probably ill calculated to meet the crisis. A feeling, rooted so deep in human nature, not excited by causes occasional and instantly removable, but resulting from a deliberate view of a fixed situation of things, would hardly yield to any influence but those of time and long habit, and certainly could not be expected to die away so long as the British interest in India was daily gaining fresh advantages over the Mussulman. Immediate conciliation was out of the question : the only concession that would prove satisfactory could not be made, and every indulgence short of it would serve but to embolden hostility. Although, therefore, all indiscriminate or passionate severity was, on every account, to be shunned, still such an emergence demanded the display rather of rigour than of lenity, of justice than of mercy. Nothing but a decisive present triumph would enable us to be generous in future ; nothing but force would lay open the ground for the gradual establishment of a dominion founded on benevolence. These considerations, which the strongest reason in its

calmest state must have deemed applicable to the supposed case, were not likely to strike less forcibly minds that had realized the case to themselves, that felt all the anxieties of an intimate concern in the scene, and were impressed with a strong conviction of imminent danger.

The dispute, therefore, ultimately turned on the adoption of a system of conciliation or a system of coercion.

This remark naturally connects itself with the great question, so much canvassed in Council, relating to the fate of the Mutineers at Vellore.—What was the state of that question at the period of which we are speaking, shall be now described.

Many of the insurgents were, of course, destroyed during the contest at Vellore. Many, as it might have been expected, fell victims to the impetuosity of the soldiers, even when they had abandoned their arms, and were endeavouring to make their escape. A considerable number too were taken prisoners; and these, immediately on the recapture of the Fortress, were executed in a body. In the course of a few days, many stragglers, who had escaped from Vellore, were discovered lurking in various parts of the country, and put under confinement.

The Commander in Chief appointed, without delay, a Native General Court Martial, for the purpose of trying those among the prisoners thus collected, whom there was manifestly sufficient evidence to prove deserving of death. The remainder, amounting nearly to six hundred men, though unquestionably implicated in a greater or less degree in the late transactions, no evidence had yet been discovered to convict before a Court Martial; they were accordingly imprisoned at the posts in the neighbourhood of which they had been seized; and in what manner they were to be disposed of, it was referred to the discretion of Government to consider.

On the 17th of July, the President recommended in Council (*q*) the suspension of all judicial proceedings on these delinquents, till the Court of Inquiry, then sitting at Vellore, should have presented its Report. The example of severity (as he observed in his Minute) had been complete. The retribution, indeed, was not more prompt and severe than just. The object of intimidation being thus attained, he thought it due to the dignity of our own character, and to the feelings of our Native subjects, that in so delicate a process we should guard against all appearance of precipitancy. Nothing was more to be dreaded than the imputation of having acted from motives of revenge and passion.

A Resolution corresponding with this recommendation was passed in Council.

Such was, at this time, the situation of affairs. The Court of Inquiry appointed by Government was still pursuing its investigations; the trials before the Native General Court Martial still continued; and the fate of the six hundred prisoners still hung in suspense.

Shortly after the transactions at Vellore, a very serious agitation took place in the subsidiary force at Hyderabad. The Turban, and the Orders respecting the marks of Cast, ear-rings, and whiskers, threw the whole of that force, amounting to ten thousand men, into the utmost disorder.

They resolved not to submit to the new Regulation ; and so general was this resolution, that Colonel Montresor, the Commanding Officer, stated to the Resident, that there was not a single Native corps on which he could, in case of emergency, place any confidence. Every thing was ripening for an open revolt, when the Commanding Officer, with the concurrence of Captain Sydenham, the Resident, took upon himself the responsibility of revoking the Orders in question.

By this judicious and spirited conduct, the tumult was instantly allayed, and the troops resumed their obedience. The revocation of the Orders by Colonel Montresor is dated the 21st of July.

On the 29th of the same month, a similar alarm, though upon less solid grounds, prevailed at Wallajahbad. Colonel Lang, who was in the command of that cantonment, conceiving that the troops under his orders had formed the intention of massacring their European Officers, took immediate measures of defence. He detached the most suspected Battalion (the First of the 23d), and called upon Colonel Gillespie, commanding the Cavalry at Arcot, for assistance, which was afforded with the promptitude characteristic of that Officer. On this occasion, Sir J. Cradock proceeded in person to Wallajahbad ; and the result of his investigation, as stated in his Letter to the Governor in Council, proved that the idea of any thing like “ a concerted plan of disaffection and evil design,” was totally unsupported by evidence. He remarked, as a striking fact, that “ the suspected Battalion marched out of camp and returned with the most exact obedience and alacrity, though in possession of their ball cartridges.” “ Nothing,” he added, “ has appeared against them beyond the irregular tumults at the Barracks, and the loose expressions of individuals, and something of a general mysterious conduct.”

These commotions, however, though local, and soon appeased, attracted the serious attention of Government. It was now thought expedient to depart from the resolution which had been taken respecting the prisoners, and to bring them to immediate trial. At the same time, a communication was made to the Supreme Government, proposing the detention of the 19th and 94th Regiments, then on the Coast, and under orders of embarkation for Europe. The crisis seemed to require measures of precaution.

The conviction of the necessity of such measures was strengthened by the purport of a Minute (*r*) presented on the 3d of August to Council by the Commander in Chief. The intelligence which it conveyed was obtained from the confession of a principal conspirator, and the voluntary communication of a Subidar of distinguished character

and services in the Native cavalry; and no intelligence could have been more unexpected or more alarming. It appeared that the Native cavalry, of whom as yet no suspicion had been entertained, were no less infected with a spirit of disloyalty than the infantry; that the most vigorous exertions were at that moment in operation for the purpose of corrupting the faith of the troops; and that the object of the conspirators was the establishment of a Mussulman Government. On the receipt of these depositions, which opened a new scene of distrust, in a quarter where we had imagined ourselves least vulnerable, it was determined to send the sons of Tippoo Sultaun instantly to Bengal, and to submit to the Supreme Government a proposal for the augmentation of the European force on the Coast by a supply from that Presidency.

The Supreme Government (*s*) sanctioned the intention of removing the Princes; but disapproved (*t*) both of the addition of an English Regiment from Bengal to the Madras Army, and of the plan of detaining the Troops under orders of embarkation. The two latter proposals were rejected, because it was conceived that the adoption of them might betray a want of confidence, and thus lead to fatal consequences. But it would not have been difficult, with proper management, to obviate any such danger. At any rate, there might be greater dangers on the other side, and to maintain an appearance of confidence was our duty only so far as it might contribute to our safety. To push the principle beyond that limit, was to sacrifice the end to the means. An explanation of these sentiments, extracted from a dispatch to the Court of Directors, was sent (*u*) to the Bengal Government, and drew from them, in return, a satisfactory tribute (*v*) of justice to the principles which had invariably guided the conduct of the Government at Madras.

On the 2d of September, the Commander in Chief submitted to the Governor in Council two propositions.

The first, which was strongly supported by the Commanding Officers of the Southern and Mysore districts, recommended, that the Mutineers condemned to death by the Native General Court Martial should be executed by detachments at the different divisions of the army. To this measure, as unnecessarily indicating a suspicion of every part of the Native force, all the Members of Council refused their assent.

The second proposition advised the erasure of the guilty regiments (the 1st and 23d) from the Army List; and received the approbation of the majority of Council. The President alone objected to it; and so deeply was he convinced of its inexpediency, that he negatived it upon his own authority.

He believed (*w*) that such a step would only serve to refresh for ever recollections which it was our wisdom to extinguish as soon as possible. As many of the Natives regarded the Mutineers, not as traitors, but as martyrs to their faith, he apprehended that this public mark of reproach might excite among their countrymen other feelings than those of terror. The Supreme Government, however, was of a different opinion (*x*), and the erasure took place.

During the course of these discussions, the Princes were removed, under a strong escort, from Vellore to Madras; where Sir E. Pellew, with his accustomed zeal for the service, had offered his own ship for the conveyance of those personages to Bengal. A proposal was, at this time, made by a Member of Council, that they should be embarked at Sadras, about thirty miles from Fort St. George. This proposal was overruled at the suggestion (*y*) of the President, on the ground that it would betray a distrust of the Natives of the capital. The escort of the Princes was, as usual, composed of a mixed force of European and Native troops. The march and embarkation took place without any unpleasant occurrence.

In the mean time, the disposal of the prisoners continued to be the subject of considerable discussion.

The President had at first proposed, that they should be tried by a Special Commission of English Gentlemen. This method was certainly the most expeditious; and he thought it also not likely to give any umbrage among the Natives, because he was then under the belief that most of the prisoners had been taken with arms in their hands: it seemed, therefore, that little remained except to pronounce sentence on criminals whose guilt was proved by the very circumstance of their seizure. It was, however, afterwards ascertained, that the greater part were apprehended unarmed by the villagers and police officers. In these more difficult and delicate circumstances, he thought it advisable to sacrifice the obvious advantages of the Special Commission to another mode of trial, which, though less expeditious, was yet more likely to consult the feelings of the Natives, and the reputation of Government. This was a trial by a Native General Court Martial.

It was clearly eligible, with a view to the effect either of punishment, or of the interposition of Government for the mitigation or remission of punishment, that the trial should be conducted before a regularly constituted Tribunal; still more, that the Tribunal should be composed of Natives. The difficulties which subsequently prevented the adoption of this arrangement, arising partly from the number of prisoners, and partly from a deficiency of evidence as to their guilt, were then unknown.

As a preliminary to the trials, the Commander in Chief had early directed Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes and Lieutenant Coombes to investigate the comparative delinquency of the prisoners confined at Vellore, and to classify them under the following heads;—1st, innocent; 2d, most guilty; 3d, less guilty; 4th, in arms on the 10th of July, but under no specific charges of guilt.

The Report drawn up by those Officers, in conformity to this direction, was presented to Council on the 9th of November, and entirely destroyed all hopes of discrimination in the treatment of the prisoners. It pronounced them all equally and most deeply implicated in the massacre, but stated it to be highly improbable that they could be convicted before a Court-Martial. The number thus condemned in the gross

amounted to four hundred. At the same time, a Report of exactly the same complexion was received from Colonel Campbell. This Officer was in charge of one hundred and fifty of the Mutineers, who had been taken in the Southern Provinces; and he had been directed to bring the principal offenders amongst them to trial at Tritchinopoly. But he now distinctly stated, that the proposed trial would be far from issuing in the conviction of the prisoners under his charge, because, though the conduct of all of them, without exception, had been atrocious in the extreme, there was not sufficient evidence to convict any one of them before a Court Martial.

The question, therefore, was now fairly before Government. Some of the six hundred might possibly be legally convicted, but of the mass it seemed equally notorious that they were guilty, and that they could not be proved so. What was to be their sentence? The Commander in Chief pressed the measure of a general banishment; the Bengal Government, that of a general amnesty. The President, objecting to both these plans, to the one as too mild, and to the other as too severe, ventured (2) to recommend the temporary continuance of the imprisonment as an expedient, which, without trespassing on either extreme, left scope for the operation of circumstances, and did not preclude an ultimate recurrence to either of the other proposals. The idea of an immediate amnesty met with the unanimous opposition of Council. The other two plans divided the members, but that of the President finally prevailed.

But, besides the delinquents whose fate was thus decided, another class of a more dubious character also claimed the attention of the Board. Among the fugitives who escaped from Vellore after the action, were more than five hundred officers and men belonging to the battalions engaged in the Mutiny, who afterwards voluntarily returned to their regiments, and were allowed to proceed in the usual course of duty. Like the prisoners already described, they were not innocent, and could not be proved guilty. The President therefore thought, that, with the exception of a few officers, whose crimes were notorious, they should be retained in the service. They would probably soon regain their habits of allegiance, and would, at least, be less dangerous in this situation than in any other: for the impossibility of legally establishing their delinquency precluded any punishment severer than a dismissal from the service; and it was not easy to calculate the possible consequences of letting loose at such a moment, in a country proverbial for the facilities which it affords to the designs of unprincipled individuals, so many hundred men bred to arms, rendered desperate by disgrace, and unprovided with any honest means of subsistence. The Council, the Commander in Chief alone excepted, acknowledged the force of these apprehensions, and acceded to the opinion of the President.

It may be proper to remark in this stage of the narrative, that the Officers of the Army in general agreed with the Commander in Chief, both as to the real origin and the proper punishment of the Mutiny. This coincidence might have been expected. Of the greater part of the European Officers, it was not to be supposed that they

should be able accurately to appreciate an injury offered to the religious feelings of the Natives. To estimate the strength of those feelings is in all cases difficult; and in the case of Military men, peculiarly so, because it will appear, from an examination of the Regulations of the Indian Army, that in many instances the Customs of the Natives had been changed with impunity. The substitution, for example, of the Military habit of the Sepoy in place of the common Hindoo or Mussulman dress, could not, it may be imagined, have been attempted without implying at least as much contempt for existing usages as that which was charged upon the late Regulations. The policy of that change may, indeed, be doubted; though it was probably, at the period of its adoption, recommended by strong reasons, and principally perhaps by the expediency, in our Carnatic wars against the French, of making it difficult to distinguish at a distance our Sepoys from our European force; but, from whatever cause originating, it has been effected. The address and caution which may have been requisite to procure its introduction, are forgotten. All that now appears is, that such an innovation was once successfully attempted; and why a similar attempt should not meet with equal success, is a question rarely asked by a superficial observer.

A great proportion too of the Military men did not regard the late Regulations respecting Dress as novelties, and could not therefore ascribe to them the perilous character of an experiment. They had, it is certain, though never inserted in General Orders, been silently acted upon in several corps; nor was it apprehended that the mere formal recognition of a practice in actual existence could convert it into a fatal innovation. So little do men advert to the distinction between the supersession and the overthrow of established customs, or reflect that national prejudices are to be carried rather by sap than by storm.

This was, in truth, the error that originally misled the Adjutant and Deputy Adjutant General, who intended nothing less than either to introduce innovations, or to affront the religious sentiments of the Natives.

The Commander in Chief too, before he acquiesced in the adoption of the Order alluded to, ascertained by every precaution in his power that he was not incurring the responsibility of enacting a new Regulation. I confess, that the first intelligence on this subject filled me with as much astonishment and regret as it excited in England; but, having obtained a more accurate knowledge of circumstances, I must be allowed to say, that none of the parties concerned in the formation of the Code deserved the obloquy to which they have been exposed. In many Corps, the practice in question was undoubtedly established; and, had it been essential to ensure its universal reception, that point also might have been attained. By judicious management, by confidential communications with the Native Officers, which might have satisfied their apprehensions on the score of Religion, and thus secured their co-operation, the change would have been insensibly but permanently effected. The neglect of these

obvious precautions decidedly proves (if further proof were necessary) in what light these Orders were regarded by their immediate authors.

This digression, into which I have been led particularly by anxiety to do justice to the character of a very meritorious Officer, Colonel Agnew, may serve to shew how natural it was for military men to underrate the most prominent cause of the Mutiny. It was also natural for them to follow the opinion of the Commander in Chief, and to give full credit to the existence of a Moorish conspiracy. The consequences, however, of this opinion are not easily to be estimated. Till that period, the confidence of the European officers in the affection of their Sepoys had been literally unlimited, and, indeed, found more than its justification in a fidelity which had stood the proof of a series of years, and of a vast variety of fortune. In the midst of this security, a mine was sprung. The Mutiny at Vellore overthrew all reliance on received principles, and produced a violent, though not unnatural, transition from the extreme of confidence to that of distrust. The Officers were tortured by the conviction of a general plot; and, from the detached manner in which the Indian troops are cantoned, found themselves left to the mercy of traitors. All was suspense and horror; and in one instance, the agony of these emotions actually ended in insanity *.

It must, at the same time, be acknowledged, that the events at Vellore, and the consequent revolution in the feelings of the Officers, were not without effect on the minds of the Soldiery. There prevailed throughout the Native Army a considerable sensation, which may not improbably, in some individual instances, have assumed a dangerous character. To some of the discontented Mussulmen, the possibility of establishing a Moorish government may have suggested ideas inconsistent with their allegiance, and opened hopes too flattering to be easily renounced or innocently retained. But the tried fidelity of the Moormen in our wars, even against Mahomedan Princes, forbids us to assign any wide range to the operation of such motives. The principal feeling, both among Hindoos and Mussulmen, was clearly solicitude in the cause of their religion, heightened perhaps by the impression produced by the existing posture of affairs. They had yet scarcely recovered from that state of stupefaction into which the minds of all men had been thrown by the sudden explosion at Vellore; there still remained the doubt and painful wonder, which attend the first struggles to escape

* The progress of the alarm created by the apprehension of the Popish Plot in the reign of Charles II. is described by Hume (vol. VI. p. 275), corresponds to a degree of curious exactness with the public feeling at Madras. Hume writes, "While in this timorous jealous disposition, the cry of a *Plot* all on a sudden struck them ears. They were wakened from their slumber, and, like men alighted in the dark, took every shadow for a spectre. The terror of each man became the source of terror to another. And an universal panic being diffused, reason and argument, and common sense and common humanity lost all influence over them. From this disposition of men's minds, we are to account for the progress and credit of the Popish Plot."

from a terrible recollection : and to these might be added, the embarrassment resulting from a consciousness of being themselves objects of jealousy. That these impressions were betrayed by the conduct of the Sepoys in a manner more easily felt than described, may be admitted ; but it must be admitted in return, that there prevailed on the part of too many of the Officers a sort of feverish vigilance, better calculated to create than to detect danger. and more ingenious in discovering conspiracies than wise in preventing them.

This representation of the state of the Army naturally belongs to the detail in which we are engaged, and its justice may be appreciated by a reference to facts.

On the 18th of October, the Officer commanding at Nundydroog (where four companies of the second Battalion of the 18th Regiment were stationed) conceived apprehensions of an immediate massacre of the Europeans. He and his Officers instantly barricaded themselves in a house, and sent to Arcot for assistance. The Sepoys, in the mean time, took no steps to interrupt these defensive arrangements, nor molested the retreat of their Officers ; they remained, on the contrary, calm spectators of the scene ; and, after a reasonable interval, all was tranquil. The Commander in Chief and General Macdowell believed that the Commanding Officer was justified in the conduct which he had pursued.

The Bengal Government, from the accounts transmitted to them, inferred (*aa*) the existence of a conspiracy at Nundydroog. It is not unimportant to mark this event, and the æra of its occurrence ; because, from a comparison of dates, it is presumable that at this æra, and in consequence of this event, the sentiments of the Supreme Government respecting the Vellore prisoners experienced the alteration which must soon be specified. The Council at Fort St. George came to no resolution on the subject of this commotion ; but, though they were not authorized to reject the evidence brought before them, supported as it was by the opinions of officers on the spot, they were disposed, on subsequent intelligence, to regard the alarm as groundless, and the appearances of danger as insufficient to justify the conduct of the Commanding Officer. In this conclusion they were fortified by the representations of the acting Resident at Mysore, and by the sentiments of Purneah, the Minister of that Government. That able Statesman, equally distinguished by the vigilance of his administration, and the sincerity of his attachment to the British interests, was unable to discover any traces of the pretended conspiracy, or any colour for the supposition that the Sepoys were engaged in intrigues with the people of Mysore.

The same apprehensions were excited at Bangalore, where the remainder of the Battalion was quartered. An investigation took place, but no adequate proof of dissatisfaction appeared. At a subsequent period, indeed, the Commanding Officer declared his conviction of the loyalty of his detachment. I shall be forgiven, if respect for an exalted character induces me to mention, that, on occasion of these disturban-

ces, the integrity and judgment of Purneah were called into exercise by a critical event. The brother of that Minister held the principal official situation under the Mysore Government at Bangalore, and was one among the objects who fell under the suspicion of the European Commanding Officer. Purneah made no attempt to screen his relation, but immediately suspended him from office, and requested that his conduct might be submitted to the examination of a Court composed solely of British Officers. This request was complied with, and the result proved most honourable to the accused. No method was forgotten to repair the insult which had been offered by these proceedings to the feelings and fame of the Mysore Government. The British Commanding Officer was removed, and a request was made by the Government of Fort St. George to Purneah, that his brother might be reinstated in office.

Four months had now elapsed since the Mutiny of Vellore. During that interval, every lenitive had been applied by Government to the irritated feelings of the troops, and of the public in general. All these efforts seemed as yet ineffectual. The irritation not only continued, but gained ground. Every day made the aspect of affairs more ominous. The most injurious reports received universal credit; prophecies, denouncing the fall of the British power, were eagerly circulated; and religious mendicants were represented as traversing the country, in order to sow the seeds of disaffection. The position of the Army was critical; a panic prevailed among the European Officers; and the Sepoys, according to many private opinions, were ripe for a revolt.

Under these circumstances, the situation of the President was peculiarly embarrassing. His favourite system of conciliation seemed to have deceived his hopes; its advocates were staggered, and its opponents triumphed. The Commander in Chief ascribed solely to its operation the existing state of affairs, and pronounced that perfect tranquillity would, long since, have followed the adoption of an opposite system. The Supreme Government (*bb*) abandoned their plan of amnesty, and saw no refuge but in the dreadful resource of a general banishment of the imprisoned Mutineers. The President, however, thought it his duty to adhere to his former line of conduct. He believed that the existing commotions were but the natural effects of the late violent concussion; and that the system which, on the maturest deliberation, he had preferred, would still eventually justify his choice.

At the same time, he did not think himself justified in grounding on this belief a neglect of any rational precaution; he advised, therefore, an alteration in the distribution of the Army, for the purpose of bringing the Native and European troops, who were broken into separate and insulated detachments, more into conjunction, and consequently more within mutual influence. This proposal, suggested by the same motives which had given being to similar proposals on a former occasion, was, like them, rejected by Council, from a dread of betraying distrust.

On the recommendation of the President, it was resolved in Council to proclaim Martial Law, the Civil Courts still continuing open. The cognizance of the Military Courts was intended to be confined to cases of Sedition and Rebellion. A few days leading Government to suspect that the reports which had been made to them had been greatly exaggerated, this resolution was suspended, and not afterwards carried into effect.

The course of events now conducts us to the view of perhaps the most extraordinary among that series of singular occurrences, to which the apprehensions of the Officers so easily gave birth.

The Commanding Officer at Palamcottah took a resolution, on the 19th of November, to disarm his whole Corps. He proceeded to separate the Mussulmen from the Hindoos, put arms into the hands of the latter, expelled the former from the Fort, and took possession of it with a handful of Europeans and a few hundred faithful Hindoos. From this devoted situation he dispatched expresses to the Commander of the Subsidiary Force in Travancore, and to Major-General Maitland, the Governor of Ceylon.

In his express to General Maitland, he states, that by a miraculous effort he has detected a desperate conspiracy, which had struck its root deep through all the Coast; that the very existence of the Company's Empire in the East turned on the immediate arrival of European assistance from Ceylon; that all the Mussulmen were concerned in the plot; that he and his brave companions had possession of the Fort; that they relied only on their citadel, a large house; and, finally, that they were determined to sell their lives most dearly. Major-General Maitland supplied, with the utmost promptitude, the required assistance; and, with no less promptitude, transmitted to England, by a vessel dispatched expressly for that purpose, the intelligence which he had received.

The letter sent to the Officer commanding in Travancore, after mentioning the proceedings at Palamcottah, went on to assure him of the progress of incendiaries among the Troops under his own command, and warned him against confiding in appearances. That Officer accordingly, without delay, disarms his whole force, but under the express declaration, that he perceived no cause whatever to suspect their fidelity.

It is impossible to regard, without surprize, the conduct of any of these Officers.

It does not appear that the Commanding Officer at Palamcottah was in possession of any information which could warrant the adoption of the measures which he pursued; but, at all events, the invidious distinction between the Hindoos and the Mussulmen, the tendency of which, either in a civil or military point of view, was equally fatal, cannot be justified. The Council directed the immediate restoration of their arms to the Mussulmen. The quiet and orderly behaviour of these Troops, under

the most cruel of all insults, shews their fidelity in a very favourable light. They resumed their arms in the same meritorious manner in which they had resigned them; and it is remarkable, that during the interval of their suspension, no desertions had taken place.

Major-General Maitland was certainly bound to supply the succours which were demanded at Palamcottah; but that, having afforded them, he should construe literally every word of a letter (*cc*) evidently written in a panic*;—that he should think it his duty to transmit the panic, yet warm, and with all its exaggerations, from India to Europe;—that he should act thus, without having referred to Fort St. George for more correct intelligence, which would have occasioned the delay only of a few days; a delay of no consequence, where the object was not to obtain succour (all hope of which was precluded by the distance), but to give information;—that, after having dispatched the vessel, he should not think it necessary to acquaint the Madras Government with the step he had taken, in a point in which they were so peculiarly concerned;—but should leave them to receive the first knowledge of his proceedings through an accidental channel, and after a long interval of time;—these are circumstances which may justly excite surprize and regret.

The President may be allowed to write feelingly on this subject, for he has good reason to know that the measure of his recal, first suggested by the accounts from Vellore, but afterwards suspended till the arrival of further information, was finally decided by the tenor of General Maitland's dispatches.

But, whatever may be thought of the proceedings in Palamcottah and Ceylon, the conduct of the Officer commanding the Subsidiary Force, it will be allowed, is not easily explicable on any acknowledged principles of action. It furnishes, perhaps, the first example in history, of an Officer disarming Troops in whose fidelity he avowedly felt the most perfect confidence. Yet, after all, the indiscriminate severity displayed in Travancore was less calculated to be injurious, than the ill-judged discrimination exercised at Palamcottah. The degradation of the Troops in the former case was at least general, and it was also accompanied with the confession that it was unmerited.

The Commanding Officer of the District issued Orders for restoring to the Subsidiary Force the arms of which they had been deprived. A General Order, suitable to the crisis, was published; the Officers commanding at Palamcottah and Travancore were removed from their Commands; and it was resolved to bring them both to a General Court Martial.

* It is not intended to impeach the personal courage of the respectable Officer here alluded to. That is undoubted. The act by which the Battalion was disarmed was, under the feelings which existed, a great proof of resolution and decision. It only shews more strongly the political panic which prevailed.

The Commander in Chief thought it necessary on this occasion, with the approbation of Council, to address confidentially a Circular Letter (*dd*) to the Commanding Officers of Corps, with a view to press upon them the conduct which it became their duty to follow. An extract from this letter will emphatically display the alarm and despondency which had overspread the army.

“ His Excellency (the Commander in Chief) alludes to the practice, originating “ probably from a recent unfortunate event, of too readily entertaining suspicions of “ the fidelity of the Troops; of seeking, with indiscreet inquiry, for grounds of such “ suspicion; marking, in conversation and in conduct, an apprehension of latent “ treachery; admitting vague rumours, and the reports of ignorant, timid, or malicious persons, as presumptive, if not positive evidence, of plots and intentions “ which have frequently no shadow of existence but in the alarms of the reporters.”

The Commander in Chief then proceeds to inculcate “ the necessity of preserving, in every emergency, an appearance of confidence; and the imperious “ duty of maintaining that firmness of conduct, which, while it avoids to show suspicion, is prepared to meet with manliness any event which may occur, and to “ exert the energy of discipline for the preservation of order and subordination.”

The General Court Martial most honourably acquitted both the Officers, a circumstance which only marks more strongly the general feeling among Military men. The Governor in Council (before whom the Proceedings of the Court Martial were laid), thought it incumbent on him to record (*ee*), in public Orders, his decided conviction of the impolicy of the measures pursued at Palamcottah and in Travancore, and to call for the cordial co-operation of all Officers, both Civil and Military, in carrying into effect the principles of confidence, respect, and conciliation towards the Native Troops, which had been recognized by the Government of Fort St. George and the Governor General in Council.

About the same time, apprehensions of a mutinous disposition were entertained by the Officers in command at Wallahjahbad and Sankerydroog.

The Quarter-Master-General, who had been dispatched to Wallahjahbad, returned a favourable report of the Troops. A few individuals, who had been guilty of using improper expressions, formed the only exception to the general statement.

The accounts from Sankerydroog were so very vague, that it was not thought necessary to take any measures in consequence; and the silence of the Commanding Officer confirmed the first opinion of the groundlessness of the alarm.

Such was the close of the disturbances which had for nearly six months harassed the Peninsula. After this, the panic wore away; the Sepoys forgot their fears of an attack upon their Religion; and the Officers no longer slept with pistols under their pillows.

To crown this favourable reverse of fortune, the discussions respecting the prisoners were at length brought to a happy issue.

We have seen that the Council had decided on the temporary continuance of their confinement, and that the Supreme Government, after having advised an amnesty, was induced by circumstances to abandon that proposal, and to concur in the project of banishment. The dispatches accordingly, from Bengal, in November 1806, contained positive directions for the immediate execution of that measure. On the receipt of these Orders, the President laid before the Board a Minute (*ff*) in which he objected to them as impolitic, and hostile to the interests of Government. He adverted to the principles on which, from the first origin of the present commotions, the Madras Government had made it a system to act; and which had, for a time at least, been sanctioned by the Supreme Authority in Bengal. He pointed out the change of tone which marked the late dispatch from Bengal, and contended that no new symptoms had appeared to warrant the adoption of any new plan of action. He maintained, that the demands of justice had been satisfied; that our part, for the future, was to be passive, and to avoid any interference with the progress of affairs to that consummation, towards which they were slowly but certainly advancing. The ferment, he gave it as his opinion, would soon spend itself, unless kept alive by our imprudence. He concluded with recommending that the remonstrance of the Government be respectfully made to the Governor-General in Council, against the banishment of the prisoners now in confinement.

The Commander in Chief also presented a Minute (*gg*) on this occasion, in which he expressed his satisfaction that the Supreme Government had at length directed a recurrence to that system of policy of which the Records amply proved that he had always been the most strenuous assertor. He declared, that the irresolution and apparent timidity of Government had protracted the disorders which, by a vigorous and seasonable exertion of authority, would have been crushed at a blow. The punishments which had been inflicted, he pronounced to be insufficient. He repeated his conviction, that the source of the late troubles was to be sought, not in the military Regulations, but in the general political measures of the Madras Administrations; and professed strong doubts as to the flattering prospects of returning quiet and loyalty. He advised, therefore, the utmost expedition in accomplishing the Orders of the Supreme Government.

The majority of Council agreed with the President. A remonstrance was made to the Governor-General in Council; who, in reply, signified his resolution to leave the fate of the prisoners entirely to the decision of the local authority; and the critical arrival of Lord Minto, in 1807, at Madras, while on his way to Bengal, gave the last sanction (if any yet were wanting) to the system of conciliation. His Lordship, being requested to assist at the consultation of the Madras Council, concurred with the opinion of the President in regard to the release of the prisoners. The face

of affairs was, indeed, at this time, such as to leave no room for hesitation on the subject; and it was decreed, by the unanimous vote (*hh*) of Council, that the prisoners should be gradually set at liberty.

Two Special Commissions (*ii*) were accordingly appointed for the trial of the prisoners. Their Reports (*jj*), together with some remarks upon them (which I finished after my removal from the Government), are to be found in the Appendix. I had the happiness to perceive that my recommendations, on all points connected with this subject, were entirely confirmed by my successor, and adopted by Council (*hh*).

The prisoners have been released in succession. They are now at large; and the society to which they have been restored has never known a period of more profound tranquillity.

After a perusal of the foregoing Narrative, it will not, I flatter myself, be very difficult to resolve our third inquiry: How far the measures which I advised, in consequence of the Mutiny at Vellore, were deserving of censure.

The temperate and conciliatory conduct of Government, after that Mutiny, has been virtually arraigned as the cause of the later commotions.

The whole of this charge, it has been intimated in some of the preceding pages, evidently turns upon this fact, — that we did not choose to act upon the belief of the existence of a regular Moorish conspiracy. To this point, therefore, the following observations shall be principally addressed.

From the manner in which the existence of a conspiracy has been generally maintained, there seems to have been an intention of implying that the previous and general character of the reigning Government was deeply embarked on the issue of its truth or falsehood. The seeds of dissatisfaction, it is conveyed, must have been sown by the mal-administration of Government. I must begin, therefore, with resisting any such implication; and declare, that, in the question before us, I by no means hold my public character to be committed in the manner supposed. Indeed, the implication, I must be permitted to add, strikes me as equally unfair and preposterous. If a conspiracy really existed, it would seem quite as obvious to seek for its source in the embittered feelings of a brave and haughty people, reduced to a state of political vassalage, and in the revengeful purposes of a powerful family hurled from a palace into a prison, as in the more circumscribed operation of discontents occasioned by the Civil Regulations of a Local Government. That the political situation of the Mussulmen *necessarily* incited them to schemes of Rebellion, I am very far from thinking; but that, supposing such schemes actually formed, we might find in that situation a full and sufficient explanation of the fact, is perfectly incontestible.

This at least will be conceded to me, that the mere naked circumstance of a conspiracy proves, in such a case, nothing at all against the local Government; and that those who, rejecting the obvious and palpable account of that circumstance, dive for some less apparent explanation, are bound to support their theory by a detail of specific facts, and a regular deduction of the event from its alledged cause. The specific charges, however, which have been brought against me, as having by injudicious measures paved the way for the Vellore Mutiny, have already been discussed with a most careful, and, I flatter myself I may add, a most successful minuteness. With respect to the vague and general insinuations now alluded to, their fate may, I trust, be safely confided to the effect of a general but solemn protest against their injustice.

I shall now state the reasons which induced me, immediately after the Mutiny at Vellore, to believe that the Moorish intrigues, though brought into action by the Mutiny, and ministering to it, did not produce it: or, in other words, to discredit the existence of a regular Moorish conspiracy.

This statement will be followed by an examination, how far the judgment, which I formed at that early crisis of the commotions, has been invalidated or confirmed by subsequent occurrences.

The supposition of a Moorish conspiracy seemed to me, in the first place, to be completely gratuitous; and, in the next, to be contradicted both by testimony and by fact.

It was not countenanced, as far as I could learn, by so much as a single *direct* proof; nor did it appear, that, excepting the equivocal testimony of one witness, even an indirect proof in its support could without violence be extorted from the evidence collected on that occasion. Its credibility, therefore, rested on the declarations of the Officers who were immediately concerned in the transactions at Vellore. It was not indeed unnatural that such an idea should be struck out in the first heat and astonishment of those transactions, and that the uncertainty which prevailed as to their real cause, should give it instant currency. By the Commander in Chief, it may be presumed, this explanation was readily admitted. It is no impeachment to the honour of that respectable Officer, to suppose that he was not slow to be persuaded of the truth of a position which removed from him a responsibility that he was far from having intended to incur.

But all this was loose opinion, and it was opposed by positive allegations; for, not only in no part of the examinations referred to was a Mussulman conspiracy, or rather Mussulman intrigue (for a conspiracy seems never to have entered even into the contemplation of the witnesses), mentioned as the leading cause of the Mutiny, but the direct reverse of this statement was invariably maintained. All the witnesses before the Military Court of Inquiry at Vellore, or before the Commission, concurred, without an exception, in attributing the origin of the unfortunate affair in question

to the Regulations on Dress, and in ascribing to the Mussulmen at Vellore only the seconding of the discontents occasioned by those Regulations. Every conversation that was detailed, every incident that was mentioned, pointed to the Regulations as the first and principal ground of provocation. It was declared by Shaik Cossim, the most credible perhaps, as the Governor-General remarks, of all the witnesses, that no attempts were made by the people of the Palace to intrigue with the Sepoys till the arrival of the new Turban; "and this declaration (adds the Governor-General) is corroborated by several other witnesses."

This being the case, I had next to consider whether any thing on the face of the evidence condemned it as absurd or improbable. Was the cause which it assigned so decidedly unequal to the effect, that it became necessary to search for some more powerful agency? Nothing of this kind could even be pretended. To over-rate the irritability of the Natives on the point of Religion was notoriously impossible; and who does not know that the energies of such a spirit, once roused to action, are always terrible and sanguinary? At the same time, that the Mussulmen were ripe for a revolt, or that a Mussulman conspiracy was equal to the effects ascribed to it, were circumstances which, even if established, were by no means conclusive against the opinion that I had formed. Nothing short of a body of facts directly substantiating, not only the existence of the pretended plot, but its immediate connection with the Mutiny, could affect for a moment the mass of presumptive and positive evidence in the opposite scale.

If, however, this mass of proofs yet required the support of an irresistible fact, that fact was supplied by the occurrences at Hydrabad. The tranquillity which, at that place, instantaneously followed a revocation of the Orders, sufficiently marked the true cause of disaffection. The revocation, as I have been assured by an eye-witness, operated on the Troops with the suddenness and efficacy of a charm.

This is a sketch of the considerations that induced me, at an early stage of those disturbances, to entertain the opinions and adopt the conduct which have been so much censured. It gave me sincere satisfaction to find that the conclusions at which I had thus arrived, were sanctioned by the authority of the Supreme Government. In the able and satisfactory Minute (*ll*) of the Governor General on this subject (transmitted to Fort St. George), may be found a complete developement of the various considerations that contributed to this general result. Was any discovery afterwards made, that ought to have shaken the conviction which I entertained, or to have rendered me more credulous with regard to the existence of a conspiracy?

By a reference to the Narrative, it will be perceived that the tumult at Hydrabad was succeeded by a breathing time of apparent tranquillity. This interval, though it gave birth and currency to many vague rumours, threw no satisfactory light on the question of a Moorish plot. The commotions, however, which followed in various

parts of the Army, seemed, in the judgment of some men, to place that question beyond the possibility of dispute. It was then that invectives against the incredulity and supineness of Government were openly hazarded, and began to borrow some degree of plausibility from the apprehensions of those to whom they were addressed. The Governor-General himself, as I have stated, was led to change his views, and to admit the reality of the supposed plots. But it may be collected from his expressions, that, though he had relinquished his former sentiments, he was far from acquiescing in the full extent of those to which he might be considered as, in some measure, a convert. Even this qualified admission of the existence of a conspiracy was not, in my humble judgment, warranted by any substantial reasons. The successive disturbances at Nundydroog, Wallahjahbad, and other cantonments, did not appear to me to constitute a new case: they only formed a natural, perhaps I might say a necessary, sequel to the preceding movements.

To imagine that the religious passions of the Natives, however excited, could by any contrivance be instantly thrown asleep, was surely to forget the usual course of the human mind under such circumstances; in which the first struggle is seldom the only one, but often even produces a second by the mere force of the shock which has been given to the feelings of men. The Mutiny at Vellore opened the way for the Mutiny at Nundydroog. Indeed, the original motives of discontent had not yet ceased their operation; and, though the Military Orders had been revoked, it was not so easy, by a stroke of the pen, to abolish the terrors which they had inspired.

But, in the midst of these intrigues, animosities, and factions, was there a symptom of a systematic Moorish conspiracy? Was there a shadow of evidence, which bore on that point? In the various investigations which were pursued (including those of the two Special Commissions finally appointed to try the prisoners), it was ascertained that there prevailed much of petulance and discontent, a good deal of a factious spirit, and somewhat, perhaps, of individual disaffection and desire of change; but of a regular train of machinations, of an organized plan of revolt, not even the slightest vestige could be traced.

The truth of the conclusions to which these observations irresistibly tend, is further corroborated by some notorious facts.

In several of the disturbances that took place, the Hindoos were equally implicated with the Mussulmen. At Sankerydroog, the principal was said to be a Hindoo; and the Minister Purneah gave it as his opinion, that the Hindoos were more alarmed and dissatisfied than the Mussulmen.

It may, indeed, be pretended, that it was naturally the first object of the conspirators to weaken our military resources; that it was, therefore, an obvious piece of policy to corrupt the Hindoos as well as the Mussulmen, and to employ them as instruments to promote a revolution, of which they were not to enjoy the immediate

advantages. On this proposition (if it deserve the name), it may be remarked, in the first place, that the explanation which it affords may, indeed, hold in those cases, where the Native force was exclusively Hindoo; but that in a cantonment, where that force was mixed of Mahomedans and Hindoos, it is at least extraordinary that the instrumentality of the latter should be preferred to that of the former; and, in the second place, that, if it prove any thing, it proves too much. The conduct here attributed to the conspirators, would argue no inconsiderable degree of sagacity and combination; and, from this specimen, it might at least have been expected, that none of their actions should be marked by a glaring deficiency in those qualities. And yet, if a conspiracy did exist, it must be notorious that, excepting in the single point of ingenuity at hiding itself, it was, beyond competition, the most clumsy, senseless, and unskilful, of any that ever disgraced the name. It was destitute of concert, of foresight, of promptitude to seize a favourable crisis, of presence of mind to redeem lost opportunities. The efforts that it made were partial, desultory, and inconsequent. It shewed only an inverted sort of activity, and seemed eager after nothing but its own discomfiture.

If a plot was laid, so extensive and systematic, what became of the talents by which it was planned? or why was it so perfect in its structure, and so wretchedly deficient in its operations? When the Officers at Nundydroog barricadoed themselves in a house, and left the field open to the conspirators, how did it happen that the latter failed to take advantage of their situation? If, in that case, they were disabled by surprize at so unexampled a proceeding, why did the same inaction occur in a second and a third instance? When the prevailing sentiments of the Officers were ascertained, and their sole resource under alarm was understood to rest in the system of fortifying themselves till the arrival of succours; whence was it that no one member of this great confederation was found, to suggest the simple expedient of attempting, at the same instant, a variety of insurrections in different parts of the country?

Such are some of the difficulties which encounter the supposition of a regular conspiracy; and, since these difficulties are not balanced by any opposing evidence of any sort, the conclusion seems sufficiently clear.

But, though I have thought myself bound to enter into a discussion, which has, perhaps been unnecessarily lengthened, the question itself is comprised in a narrow compass.

Let the truth or fallacy of my judgment respecting a Moorish conspiracy be decided by events.

The system of conciliation adopted by Government avowedly rested on the disbelief of a conspiracy, and would, on the contrary supposition, have been perilous in the extreme. From the nature of the remedy, it is fair to argue to that of the disease.

When I advised that line of conduct, I knew the responsibility which I incurred. When I adhered to it, in spite of much opposition and many alarming appearances ; when I was, in consequence, charged with obstinacy, incredulity, and irresolution ; I still looked forward for my justification to the final issue. When the Commander in Chief, even at so late a period as January 1807, observed, in a Minute, that “ it appeared to him a reasonable conclusion, that [according] as success or failure marked the progress of the measures pursued, he might, in justice, determine their wisdom or unfitness,” I willingly accepted the challenge, and now revert to it with peculiar satisfaction. The character of the measures pursued, my own character, and that also of the Government, were all staked upon the result of those measures ; and what has been that result? Success, complete, unequivocal, and lasting.

The pacific plan* terminated, at length, in the liberation of nearly 600 prisoners : whose guilt, on the supposition of a conspiracy, admitted neither of denial nor of pal-

* It may now be considered peculiarly fortunate that the system of severity did not finally prevail. What would have been thought of British Justice, if in the case of Vellore the Natives had been punished *en masse*, while to the Europeans engaged in the recent Mutiny at Madras, with the exception of a few examples, general forgiveness has been granted. In reference to the latter most unfortunate calamity, the Writer will venture to express his anxious hope that the Government and the Legislature will not rest satisfied with the opinion, that a spirit of casual insubordination (arising according to prevailing doctrines from improbable and inadequate causes) has alone produced this crisis, and that nothing now remains but to give a strong support to the Government abroad. Undoubtedly the Punishment of Guilt and the Maintenance of public Authority are objects of the highest importance and of the first care, but these do not necessarily exclude an enquiry into the causes of commotion, or a deliberate and impartial review of all the past transactions, as relating either to the interests of the Public or of Individuals.

In every view of the late events, it is impossible to contemplate them without surprise and sorrow, or to anticipate the future without serious apprehension. But it would be a most fatal error to suppose that the cause is of yesterday. Let enquiry be made of those who have filled the highest Civil and Military situations, and who have practically observed the working of the whole machine abroad. If such persons are desired to state what causes have in their judgment led to, although they certainly have not produced (the immediate cause is a totally distinct consideration), this melancholy result, their answers will probably be uniform in tracing the defect of the public Agency abroad to the inefficiency of the directing and controuling Authority at home—to a formation and distribution of power in England, which in its effects is as fatal to confidence between the Authorities at home and abroad, as it is destructive of harmony and subordination in India.

liation. The phantom of a conspiracy silently disappeared. After a few natural struggles all discontent and danger died away; and the latest accounts ascertain the continuance of a perfect calm in every part of the Peninsula. This is the issue which finally settles the question of a Moorish conspiracy, and completely justifies my opinions and my conduct.

An attentive examination of the Structure of the Home Government, and of the improvements (as they certainly were) which were adopted in 1783, will lead to the decided conviction, that it did not possess the principles either of vigorous management or of active and powerful controul, and experience has proved, that with the exception of a part of the period of the able, upright, and efficient administration of Indian Affairs by Lord Melville, the system has not practically answered. For, notwithstanding the efforts, though perpetually counteracted, of those who, in the direction of the foreign Governments, have laboured to establish just principles of public conduct, were successful for a time in producing among the subordinate agents as much probity and public virtue as exists under any Government on earth, still, effort is temporary in its nature. These did not grow out of the system, but were opposed to it. They endeavoured without avail to avert its effects, and the period seems rapidly approaching when the influence of these efforts shall be utterly extinguished. It must be manifest that all attempts at a permanent and systematic reformation abroad must necessarily continue to be worse than nugatory, when the Authority from which they ostensibly emanate is itself the object which most urgently calls for reform.

To these remarks upon the system at large, it may also be added, not indeed in justification of the conduct of the Army, but for the purpose of rendering more efficient one of the great features of our National strength, that the Company's Army have not been always treated with the consideration which till very lately they had so justly merited. It seems indispensable that the Native Army should be taken under the immediate protection of the Crown, and that an union of the King's and the Company's Troops should be made upon principles of equality, fairness, and liberality. It would further be desirable, if it be practicable, not to exclude totally from the Officers of the Indian Army the honours, advantages, and improvement of the general Military Service of their Country, provided that the Native remains a local Army, and that the requisite qualifications of Officers for that Service are secured not by general injunctions to the Authorities at home or abroad, which might possibly be evaded, but by positive legislative enactments, which no Authority can dare to disobey.

London, May 24, 1810

It may now be proper briefly to recapitulate the principal points which I have endeavoured to establish in the preceding pages

I have, in the first place, adverted to the Military Orders, which certainly formed, at least, the immediate occasion of the Mutiny.

It has been shewn, that I was not concerned in the issuing of those Orders; nor had any knowledge of their existence, till after their publication; nor even, excepting as to one of them, till they had done their worst; that, when a reference was made to Government on the expediency of revoking the Order respecting the Turban, it was accompanied with a representation, on the part of the Commander in Chief, of the evils to be apprehended from an immediate revocation of that Order, which was stated to involve the very existence of his military authority and controul; that, at the same time, there was no sufficient ground made out for the revocation; and that, consequently, however unwise in my opinion the publication of that Order might have been, its revocation, under such circumstances, could only have been justified by a well-founded apprehension of events still more dreadful, if any such in their consequences can well be imagined, than the relaxation of military discipline.

I have, in the next place, directed your attention to the consideration of certain political measures, which have been assigned as the remoter causes of the Mutiny. Of the local arrangements at Vellore, I have proved, that, on the scale of the East, the establishment of the family of Tippoo was not extravagant; that the division of commands which has been complained of, was justified by existing circumstances; and that, in point of fact, as to the Mutiny, those arrangements, in general, have been acquitted, by the Court of Inquiry at Vellore, of any mischievous influence.

I have considered, next, the Judicial system which I had, in part, the honour of introducing into the territories subject to the Madras Government; and, since its introduction has been severely censured, as calculated to excite discontent and disaffection, I have been led to enlarge on its nature and objects; to recount the steps by which it has been perfected; the great names by which it has been sanctioned; the intrinsic excellencies which form its most powerful recommendation; and, finally, the order, happiness, and public prosperity, which have invariably followed its establishment, both in Bengal and in Madras.

In connexion with these topics, I have been called, in the third part of this Inquiry, to the view of the subject of a less general, though not less interesting nature; I mean, the effect which the conduct of Government is accused of having produced, in unnecessarily keeping alive the irritation that could not fail to be occasioned by the disturbance at Vellore.

The whole of this charge hinges on this fact, that Government, refusing to believe the existence of a Moorish conspiracy, adopted a system of conciliation in preference to one of severity. As I was individually responsible for that preference, it became me to give the reasons by which it was warranted.

More clearly to elucidate the point in discussion, I have thought it advisable to present you with a sketch of the events that succeeded the first Mutiny. I have detailed the progress, decline, and extinction of discontent in the army; the opinions that divided Council: the struggles between the two plans of conciliation and severity, with the share which I had in them; the adoption of the former by Government; its apparent failure for a time; the consequent clamour and invective—and its ultimate success; the discussions relating to the prisoners taken at Vellore—their issue; the sanction given by Lord Minto to the line of conduct which I had conscientiously pursued; and the happy close, under the operation of that conduct, of the whole series of commotions.

In a recurrence to this detail, as directly bearing upon the question, whether the mismanagement of Government contributed to prolong the continuance of disorders which prudence and vigour might have immediately extinguished, I have been compelled to enter into the inquiry respecting the existence of a Moorish conspiracy, because the system of conduct which I adopted was avowedly founded on the disbelief of such a conspiracy, and has been arraigned expressly on that ground.

Having, therefore, expressed my conviction that the late military Regulations formed not only the immediate, but also the primary cause of the Mutiny, and that the Moorish intrigues acted only an auxiliary part in the affray, I have exposed, at some length, the idea of a regular and preconcerted Moorish conspiracy, as one supported by no proofs of any kind, and opposed by a host both of probabilities and of facts.

After all, however, I have referred the decisive adjustment of the point in dispute to the issue of events.

If the measures that were pursued have been effectual, little further argument can be needed to prove that they were suitable to the exigency. This appeal to the verdict of facts has borne me out in all my conclusions, and enabled me to rest my final justification on the present state of the Peninsula.

There are occasions, Gentlemen, on which egotism is not vanity. I have a right to state my services, however humbly I may think of their deserts, when they seem to me undervalued or neglected; and peculiarly so, when they are slighted in a quarter where I had presumed to hope they would be best appreciated. The Mutiny at Vellore cannot be attributed to me directly or indirectly; but I do assume to myself the merit, by a resolute adherence to a wise principle, an adherence in the face of obloquy and opposition, of having re-established order and confidence; of having thus averted the numerous calamities which the adoption of an opposite system of policy would have entailed on India, and ultimately on Great Britain; and, above all, of having saved the national character from disgrace. And what has been my recompence? I have been removed from my situation, and condemned as an accomplice in measures with which I had no further concern than to obviate their ill consequences. My dismissal was effected in a manner harsh and mortifying; and the forms which custom has prescribed, to soften the severity of a misfortune at all events sufficiently severe, were, on this single occasion, violated, as if for the express purpose of deepening my disgrace. Whatever have been my errors, they surely have not merited a punishment, than which a heavier could hardly have been awarded to the most wretched incapacity, or the most criminal negligence.

Under these circumstances, I present myself to your notice. I take it for granted that the Court of Directors have been misinformed; and that, to place the question before them in its true light, is to obtain redress. My claims are not extravagant: I state them, and I trust modestly. I have been severely injured in my character and feelings: for these injuries I ask reparation; if, indeed, any reparation can atone for feelings so deeply aggrieved, and a character so unjustly compromised in the eyes of the world.

In complying with my demands, you will discharge, if I may venture to say so, what is due no less to your own honour than to mine; and I am confident, that, in affording you an opportunity of performing an act of justice, I pay you the most gratifying mark of respect which it is in my power to offer.

I have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient Servant,

WILLIAM CAVENDISH BENTINCK.

London, Feb. 7, 1809.

Burlington House, Nov. 21, 1809.

SIR,

HAVING communicated to Sir John Cradock my Memorial addressed to the Court of Directors, under date the 7th of February last, he has pointed out to me two passages, wherein the same fact has been incorrectly stated: It is said in page 2, and repeated in a following page, that Sir John Cradock had issued an Order, directing the Sepoys to wear black stocks, and white jackets. No such order was issued by Sir John Cradock.

It is unnecessary for me to explain to the Court the accident which led to the introduction of this error. But it is not less due to Sir John Cradock than to the Court, and not less to my own character, that the error, as soon as made known to me, should be mentioned to the Court. I feel particular regret at this circumstance, as I learn it to be Sir John Cradock's opinion that the assertion may have operated very much to his injury, on the minds of the Court of Directors.

I confess, Sir, it would be most satisfactory to me to receive your assurance, either that this unfavourable impression had not been produced, or, if existing, that it has been removed by the present explanation.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

W. BENTINCK.

To the Chairman of the Court of Directors.

At a COURT of DIRECTORS, held on WEDNESDAY, 29 Nov. 1809;

RESOLVED, UNANIMOUSLY,

THAT the Chairman be desired to inform Lord William Bentinck, that the order imputed to Sir John Cradock, and, as it now appears, erroneously imputed, enjoining the Sepoys to wear white jackets and black stocks, was not of consequence in

determining the proceeding of the Court towards that honourable Officer: and that, in a resolution passed by the Court on the 25th of July last, containing their final judgment on his conduct, it had no weight, and was wholly out of their contemplation, the said resolution having indeed acquitted him of having at all in intention or act violated the Castes of the Natives. The Court, however, cannot but applaud the feeling which has induced Lord William Bentinck to make the communication now addressed to them; and they are persuaded it must prove satisfactory to the honourable mind of Sir John Cradock.

A P P E N D I X

TO THE

MEMORIAL

ADDRESSED

TO THE COURT OF DIRECTORS

BY

LORD WILLIAM CAVENDISH BENTINCK.

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E X T R A C T

FROM THE

MINUTES OF THE COURT OF DIRECTORS, 25th JULY, 1809.

RESOLVED, That under the impressions universally entertained, both in India and Europe, at the breaking out of the Vellore Mutiny, that it was occasioned by the wanton or needless violations of the religious usages of the Natives—an opinion considerably sanctioned by the Supreme Government of Bengal, and even countenanced by the first dispatches of the Fort St. George Presidency; and under the impressions, then also general, of the dangers to which the Company's interests were exposed, and of the necessity of a change in the chief offices of Civil and Military Command, as well to vindicate the national respect for the religious usages of our Native subjects, as to make a sacrifice to their violated rights, to restore public confidence, and to relieve the Executive Body of the Company, with whom so much responsibility rested, from the anxiety and apprehensions occasioned by so unexampled and alarming a calamity, it became natural and expedient for them to remove Lord William Bentinck from the Government, and Sir John Cradock from the Command of the Army of Fort St. George. And although from the explanations that have since been given by those personages respectively, and from the further evidences which have come before the Court, it appears that the Orders in question were far from being intended by the Members of the Madras Government, to trench in the least upon the religious tenets of the Natives, and did not in reality infringe them, although the uninformed Sepoys were led at length to believe that they did; yet the effects produced having been so disastrous, and associated in the Native mind with the administration of the then Governor and Commander-in-Chief, and those Officers besides having in the judgment of the Court been defective, in not examining with greater caution and care into the real sentiments and dispositions of the Sepoys, before they proceeded to

inforce the Orders for the Turban ; the Court must still lament, that as, in proceeding to a change in the Madras Government, they yielded with regret to imperious circumstances, so, though they have the pleasure to find the charges originally advanced against the conduct of the Governor and the Commander-in-Chief, respecting the violations of Cast, to have been, in the sense then attached to them, misapplied and defective, also in general vigilance and intelligence ; yet that, as the misfortunes which happened in their Administration, placed their fate under the government of public events and opinions, which the Court could not controul, so it is not now in their power to alter the effects of them.

APPENDIX.

(a)

TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL FANCOURT,
Commanding Vellore.

Fort St. George, 7th May, 1806.

SIR,

I HAVE received by express of yesterday's date your letter, and have submitted it to the Commander in Chief.

Whilst the Commander in Chief regrets the cause which requires such measures, he feels it to be his duty to check, by the most decided measures, the symptoms of insubordination which you have reported, in the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment of Native Infantry.

His Excellency has therefore ordered to Vellore a detachment of His Majesty's 19th Light Dragoons, who will receive and escort to the Presidency the nineteen men confined by Lieut - Colonel Darley, for trial before the General Court Martial now sitting, against whom he will prefer charges, and prepare to support the same by requisite evidence.

You will also direct the Non-commissioned Officers of the Grenadier Company (the two who did not refuse the Turban, in the first instance, excepted) to be reduced to the ranks,—The Commander in Chief deeming a man who hesitates a moment to obey an order, unfit to bear the character of a Non-commissioned Officer.

You will further, through Lieut.-Colonel Darley, direct the Native Commissioned Officers of the 2d Battalion of the 4th Regiment of Native Infantry, immediately to make up, and wear Turbans of the prescribed pattern. Disobedience or hesitation on their part will be instantly followed by dismissal from the service in public orders on your report.

Lieutenant-Colonel Kennedy has orders, should you require it, to march the 19th Dragoons to Vellore to assist in enforcing obedience.

It is the intention of the Commander in Chief immediately to relieve the 2d Battalion of the 4th Regiment; but, though he thinks proper to remove that Corps from Vellore, he will not admit of hesitation to the Orders he has given.

(Signed)

P. A. AGNEW,
Adjutant-General of the Army.

(b)

Extracts from Evidence of Witnesses examined as to the objectionable nature of the Turban, by the Military Court held at Vellore.

Kurupah Havildar, Major, 2nd Battalion, 4th Regiment.

Q. Do you think that by wearing the Turban of the new muster any man of the highest Cast would suffer degradation? or is there any thing about the Turban which would affect the prejudices of Cast?

A. There is no objection at all to the Turban ; nor will the wearing of it, to the best of my opinion, degrade a man of the highest Cast, nor will it affect the prejudices of Cast.

Q. Of what Cast are you ?

A. I am a Malabar.

Jemidar Salam Ally, Adjutant of 2nd Battalion of 4th Regiment.

Q. You are a Seid *, it appears. The first question put to the preceding is repeated to the present Witness

A. I think that any Cast man might wear it without suffering degradation, and that there is nothing about it to prejudice the Cast of any one.

(c)

Evidence before the Native General Court Martial.

Subidar Sheik Emaum, 2nd Battalion, 4th Regiment.

Q. What Cast are you ?

A. Sheich.

Q. Do you think that a man of the highest Class would be degraded by wearing the new Turban ? or is there any thing about it that would at all affect the most strict prejudices of their Religion ?

A. No.

Q. Did you, the Jemidar and Native Adjutant, remonstrate with the prisoners on the impropriety of their refusing to wear the Turban, and say that you were men of very high Cast, and had no objection to wear it ?

A. Yes.

Q. Were the prisoners made particularly to understand that they were acting in direct disobedience of Orders ?

A. Yes, frequently.

Jemidar Chang Sing, 2nd Battalion, 4th Regiment, N.I.

Q. Did the Subidar, yourself and Native Adjutant, remonstrate with the prisoners, and tell them that you, who were men of very high Cast, had no objection to wear the Turban, and that their Cast would not be in the least injured by it ?

A. Yes ; and in reply they both observed, that we were Officers, and might agree to wear it if we pleased, but they never would.

Q. At that time were any Sepoys standing by, who had agreed to wear the Turban ?

A. Yes, several.

Q. Were these Sepoys pointed out to the prisoners as examples of obedience ?

A. Yes, they were ; and the Non-commissioned Officers also, not only by the Colonel, but likewise by the Subidar and Native Adjutant.

Q. What Cast are you ?

A. A Brahmin.

Q. In your opinion is there any thing about the Turban, either in shape or materials, that could affect the prejudices of the highest and most tenacious Cast ?

A. No ; any Cast might wear it.

* The highest of the Mussulmen Sects.

(d)

FROM SIR J. CRADOCK TO THE R. HON. THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL

Nundydroog, June 29th, 1806

MY LORD,

I MUST have recourse to your Lordship's judgment, and that of Council, to relieve me from great anxiety and embarrassment upon the subject of the Turbans, the full particulars of which are so well known to your Lordship, and upon the proceedings, from my absence, I have already requested your Lordship's direction.

The construction of the Turban originated from the advice and under the superintendence of Colonel Agnew, the Adjutant-General, and Major Pierce, the Deputy Adjutant-General; and as an alteration from the former one appeared wanting, I thought I could not confide so simple a matter to better hands, or officers of more local experience.

I have the strongest reasons to suppose that almost universal objection arises against the Turban; and though force and punishment may overcome individual opposition, yet the firm dislike does not abate, and the frequent recurrence of severity may produce, though it may be remote, bad consequences.

I am as aware, as the human mind can possess the sentiment, that opposition to military and just authority cannot be yielded to, and that the attempt must be crushed in its earliest stage.

This is the sole reasoning towards a British soldier; and, were it purely a British case, I should neither feel embarrassment, nor should I thus trouble your Lordship in Council.

But upon the prejudices of India, the force of Cast, which in its various shapes no European may perfectly comprehend, it is allowable even in a soldier's mind to pause, and solicit the advice of the Head and his companions in the Government.

The question is not confined to the judgment of the ignorant Soldier, it is the subject of conversation among the best-informed Officers, and my intelligence from Seringapatam, where there is a numerous garrison, is, that it is the common cry, that the next attempt will be to make the Sepoys Christians.

I lay before your Lordship, in confidence, a private letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Brunton; and the same sentiment prevails with many other moderate and discreet officers.

Still it is my wish, and the best judgment I can apply to this untoward subject, to persevere and conquer prejudice, as perhaps the least evil; but where consequences may ensue of a disadvantageous nature, and even the source of our recruiting at stake, so difficult at all times with due selection and effect, I am not satisfied in my own mind to persevere to the full extent, without recurrence to your Lordship's advice, and the sanction of Government.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieutenant-General.

(Answer)

FROM THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL TO THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF.

Fort St. George, July 4, 1806.

SIR,

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 29th ult^o.

We beg to assure you that we entertain a just sense of the motives under which your Excellency has referred for our consideration the difficulty which has occurred in carrying into effect the late alteration in the Dress of the Native Corps of this Establishment.

From the difficulty with which that measure has been attended, we are led to think, that it might have been desirable to have avoided the adoption of it ; but we concur in the sentiments which your Excellency appears to entertain with respect to the probable injury of receding from an act which has received the confirmation of public authority.

If there had been reason to suppose that the late change of Dress was liable to the objection of militating against the Religious Principles of the Inhabitants of this Country, we should have had no hesitation in immediately recommending to your Excellency the relinquishment of the intention to establish the proposed change. But as it appears from the evidence taken in the late Enquiry at Vellore, that no objection of this nature exists, we certainly deem it advisable that the alternative of yielding to the clamour arising from an unfounded prejudice should, if possible, be avoided.

It will at the same time be desirable to avoid, if possible, the disagreeable consequences attending measures of severity, and for that purpose we beg leave to propose for your consideration, the expediency of issuing, under the authority of the Government, a General Order to the Native Troops of this Establishment, conveying to these Troops a general assurance of there being no intention to introduce any changes incompatible with the Laws or Usages of their Religion.

As much of the difficulty which has been experienced appears from the information conveyed in your Excellency's Letter to be founded on the apprehension of further changes, we are willing to hope that a General Order of the nature which we have proposed will be calculated to tranquillize the minds of the Native Troops, and at the same time to avert the injurious consequences which might be occasioned to military discipline by the relinquishment of a public measure.

We have the honour to transmit to your Excellency a General Order, in the form which we have stated, and, in the event of your concurring in its adoption, we beg to request that your Excellency will direct its circulation, in such mode as may in your Excellency's judgment appear best calculated for the attainment of the proposed object.

We have the honour to add, that the Order will not be circulated at the Presidency until we shall have received the communication of your Excellency's sentiments respecting its publication.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.
W. PETRIE.
J. STRANGE.

(e)

G. O. BY GOVERNMENT.

(Transmitted to the Commander in Chief, previously to publication.)

Fort St. George, July 4, 1806.

THE Right Honourable the Governor in Council, having been informed by His Excellency the Commander in Chief of the opposition which has been in some instances experienced in establishing an alteration which it was deemed expedient to adopt in the form of the Turbans in use amongst the Native Corps of this Establishment, his Lordship in Council is led to express his extreme regret that any part of the Native Army, whose merits have been so frequently extolled and rewarded by this Government, should have suffered itself to be deluded by an unfounded clamour.

It will be in every instance the wish of the Right Honourable the Governor in Council to evince a sacred regard for the Religious Principles of the Native Troops, as well as of all other inhabitants of this country ; but in the present case it appears, after the strictest enquiry, and

according to the testimony of Natives of the highest Cast, that the opposition which has been experienced in the late change of Turbans is destitute of any foundation in either the Laws or Usages of the Mahomedan or Hindoo Religions; and any persons who may persevere in that opposition cannot in consequence fail to be subjected to the severest penalties of Military Discipline

His Lordship in Council is however willing to hope, that the salutary examples which have already taken place in the punishment of the chief Instigators of the opposition, will be sufficient to excite in the minds of the Native Corps of this Establishment a correct sense of their duty; for, while his Lordship in Council repeats his determination to use every practicable means, in conjunction with His Excellency the Commander in Chief, to suppress all marks of insubordination and groundless discontent, it is not less the determination of his Lordship in Council, or of the Commander in Chief, to afford every just protection to the Native Troops in the exercise of their Religious Rites and the observance of their Established Usages.

By Order of the Right Honourable the Governor in Council,
(Signed) G. BUCHAN,
Chief Secretary to Government.

(f)

FROM SIR J. CRADOCK TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

Nundydroog, July 7, 1806.

MY LORD,

I HAVE been much honoured this morning by the receipt of the letter from your Lordship in Council upon the subject of the Turban, and feel myself peculiarly gratified by the transmission of the proposed Order by Government previous to circulation.

I take the liberty to express my entire concurrence with the spirit and terms of the Order, as every way calculated to preserve just authority, and still to allay any prejudices that may exist upon the imputed disregard to the rights attached to Cast or antient custom. The point was of infinite embarrassment; and if any act was to be resorted to beyond the immediate and constant vindication of violated discipline as it might arise, I conceive that an Order from Government of this nature would seem to promise the best effect.

I will confess, that by the present communication with Government I have gained the object I had in view, which was to receive from them an unreserved opinion as to the propriety of full coercion, should it prove necessary, but which, situated as this country is, buried in the absurdities of Cast and prejudice, dear to them as existence, I was fearful to take a step of any doubt without explicit knowledge and the sanction of Government.

Since I had last the honour to address your Lordship in Council, I have heard nothing more; which silence leads me to hope that the disinclination to the Turban has become more feeble, or perhaps that the reports have been exaggerated. Under that view it may be judicious to postpone the publication of the Order, either to let the subject fall to the ground, as no longer the interposition of Government is required, or to re-assume the issue, as your Lordship in Council may determine by future event.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieut.-Gen.

(g)

PRESIDENT'S MINUTE.

IT appears to me necessary, in order to do away a possible charge of inconsistency, of pusillanimity, or of unnecessary concession, that I should distinctly explain the grounds of my former opinion respecting the Turbans, as well as the reasons which have induced me entirely to change that opinion.

When the reference was made by the Commander in Chief for the opinion of Council, whether it might be expedient to enforce or revoke the Order for the new Turbans, it must be recollected that a Mutiny had broken out in the 1st Battalion of the 4th Regiment; that the Ringleaders had been tried by a Court Martial consisting of Native Officers; that it had been proved on the Trial, by the Evidence of a Seyd and of a Bramin, that the Turbans contained nothing contrary to their Casts; that these prisoners had been found guilty, and had been punished, upon satisfactory and undoubted evidence to the absence of all just cause of complaint. I considered that the Order could not be retracted without giving encouragement to that disposition to turbulence and clamour, which must exist in all large bodies of men, and without therefore hazarding the discipline and subordination of the Army. It appeared to me in consequence proper, that the authority of the Government should be interposed in aid and in support of the Orders of the Commander in Chief, at the same time professing the utmost respect for the Religious opinions and Customs of the Natives, and disclaiming all intention of encroaching upon them. With these feelings the General Order of the 4th July was written. The Commander in Chief did not publish it, from not considering it necessary, according to the discretionary instructions which accompanied that document; and it is fortunate that it was not published.

Upon the occasion of that reference the Turban stood as the single cause of dissatisfaction; but it has since come to my knowledge, that other Orders have been issued in the Code of Regimental Standing Orders, which would appear positively and directly to do away one of the most sacred and universal of the Hindoo Customs—I mean an Order which prohibits the Sepoys from wearing the Marks of Cast upon their foreheads while on Duty. Another, perhaps not equally important, relates to the Whiskers, and a third, to the wearing of ornaments. All these customs of the Natives are dear to them, and consistent with the most perfect military discipline; and no interference in my opinion should be had with them. Placing myself in the situation of a Sepoy, I should certainly feel prodigious distrust and doubt of the intention of these Orders. It would be natural for more enlightened people than the Sepoys to reason in this manner. “They first take away the external marks of our Casts and Religious distinctions; they then desire to change our Dress, and to assimilate our Turbans to the Caps of the Portuguese Drummeis. They mean next to make us Christians!” This I believe to be the general reasoning of the Army, and the cause of great dissatisfaction. I confess that I think there is just ground for the alarm and feeling of the Sepoys; and justice, as well as policy, requires that complete satisfaction should be given to them. In proportion as I should have been inclined to persevere with unshaken determination in resistance to unfounded clamour, in the same degree do I feel ready to give up, what I am convinced was wrong for us to ask and for them to give.

For these reasons I recommended, that a General Order suspending the late Instructions respecting the Dress of the Sepoys should be published, either by the Commander in Chief, or direct by the Governor in Council, as might appear most advisable to the Board.

(Signed)

Fort St. George, July 15, 1806.

W. BENTINCK.

Extract from a Code of Military Regulations established in the Army of Fort St. George.

“ IT is ordered by the Regulations that a Native Soldier shall not mark his face to denote his Cast, or wear Ear-rings when dressed in his Uniform; and it is farther directed, that at all Parades, and upon all Duties, every Soldier of the Battalion shall be clean-shaved on the chin. It is directed also that uniformity shall, as far as is practicable, be preserved in regard to the quantity and shape of the hair upon the upper lip.”

(g)

IN SECRET CONSULTATION, 14th July, 1806.

AFTER mature consideration of the circumstances which have come to the knowledge of the Board regarding the late Mutiny at Vellore, and regarding the discontent which appears to have been excited by the late changes in the Dress of the Native Troops, it is resolved, that the following Letter and Draft of a General Order be dispatched to the Commander in Chief.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUT.-GEN. SIR J. CRADOCK, K. B.

Commander in Chief, &c. &c.

SIR,

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK has had the honour to receive this forenoon a Letter from your Excellency, informing him of your intention to proceed to Vellore, in consequence of the distressing events which have occurred at that place.

We are in consequence induced to take the earliest opportunity of informing your Excellency, that concurring accounts which have been received from various quarters having agreed in ascribing the late discontent which has been manifested in different Native Corps of this Establishment, to the change which has been adopted in the Dress of the Sepoys, it is our particular wish that the subject may obtain your Excellency's early attention.

As the causes which may have immediately operated in producing the late dreadful commotion at Vellore remain yet to be developed, it would not be proper to ascribe that event to the circumstance to which we have alluded. But we can have no hesitation, from the accounts which we have received, in now stating our belief that very injurious effects have resulted from it.

The Letter which we addressed to your Excellency on the 4th instant, will have made you sufficiently acquainted with our sense of the strong objection which exists against now revoking the Order which was issued respecting the Dress of the Native Corps; and we should be happy if the measure could be avoided; but we confess to your Excellency that the spirit of dissatisfaction has shown itself to a greater extent than we had supposed, and we have now great doubts whether any other measure than the entire revocation of the Order would be effectual towards allaying the ferment which appears to have been excited.

We beg leave, therefore, to refer the subject to your consideration, and to solicit your Excellency's early sentiments regarding it. From the opinion communicated in your Excellency's letter of the 29th *ultimo*, we are satisfied of your disposition to adopt any measure calculated to restore harmony in the Native Army of this Presidency, that may be compatible with the preservation of discipline. If, therefore, your Excellency should concur in

the opinion which we have expressed, it will remain to be determined whether the Order for restoring the Dress of the Native Corps to its former footing shall be issued under your Excellency's authority, or under the authority of the Government; and on that point we shall be desirous to hear your opinion as soon as may be practicable, in order that any measure which may be determined on may be immediately adopted.

We beg leave to transmit to you the Draft of a General Order, which we consider applicable to the occasion, and in the event of your Excellency deciding to publish the Order which we have suggested under your own authority, it may be advisable that it should be published without further reference to the Presidency.

Your Excellency will have been informed of the intention to assemble a Commission at Vellore, for the purpose of enquiring into the circumstances of the late Mutiny; and the Members of the Commission have been directed to meet at that place without delay.

We have the honour to be,

(Signed)

&c.

W. BENTINCK,
&c. &c. Council.

Fort St. George, July 14th, 1806.

P. S. We have thought it proper to transmit this Letter by express to your Excellency, and we shall be happy to receive your reply in the same mode.

G. O. BY _____

IT having been represented to the Right Honourable the Governor in Council, that considerable misunderstanding has occurred amongst some of the Native Corps of this Establishment with respect to a late alteration in the Dress of the Native Corps; and it being in all cases the desire of His Lordship in Council, and of the Commander in Chief, to show every just degree of attention to the Usages of the Native Troops, it has been in consequence resolved, that the Orders which have been considered liable to the objection of affecting those Usages, shall be rescinded.

N. B. If the Order should be published by the Commander in Chief, it will be altered accordingly.

(h)

IN SECRET CONSULTATIONS, 23d July, 1806.

Extract from the Minutes of Council, dated 23d July, 1806.

THE Commander in Chief having arrived at the Presidency, and having taken his seat at the Board, their consideration is directed to the Instructions issued under the Orders of His Excellency, on the 17th instant, with respect to the discontinuance of the new Turbans.

The following Minutes are recorded on that subject by the President, by Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Strange.

I SUBMIT to the Board, a Copy of a Circular Letter addressed by the Commander in Chief to the Officers commanding Divisions, the Subsidiary Force at Hyderabad, and Travancore. It has been transmitted to the Town Major of Fort St George, for the purpose of being communicated, with my permission, to the Corps in Garrison.

It will be observed that the second paragraph contains an Order to be given to all Corps to make up the Turbans on the formerly established pattern, "*unless the Native Officers and Men should desire to wear that which it was intended to adopt, in which case they may be permitted to do so.*"

I should wish to be entirely silent with respect to this Order, but I am, by my situation, unavoidably made a party to it, and my sanction to its publication might hereafter be construed into an approval of its purport. I have deemed it therefore expedient to submit my doubts to Council, and to consult their sentiments upon them.

It appears to me to be impolitic to revive the agitation of a question (the Turban) which, to say the least of it, has been made one of the prettexts of all the dissatisfaction which has arisen. To the Order itself, without consideration of the circumstances under which it is issued, and the persons to whom it is addressed, no particular objection can be made. It may perhaps be a matter of doubt, whether the opinions of Soldiers should be at any time so directly consulted. But upon a point of Religious Prejudice the same objection might not be considered so strongly to stand, but in these cases a more indirect communication would seem preferable. However, the reference to the consent of the individuals themselves appears to be a secure mode at least of avoiding any dissatisfaction in carrying this particular object.

I am apprehensive, however, that its continuance may be attended with much future inconvenience. It is, I think, possible that Commanding Officers, seeing that a degree of importance is still attached by their Commander in Chief to this Turban, may use an improper degree of influence in carrying its adoption. It is possible that in many Corps, composed as they all are of various Casts, the agitation of this question by men of different religions and prejudices may produce much disunion and ill-blood. It is possible further, that in the event of its being partially adopted by some Corps, that dissensions of a more serious nature may take place in the Army at large.

These are, as shortly as I can state them, the doubts which I feel of the propriety of this Order. Past occurrences, and the feelings of irritation produced by them, cannot be too soon obliterated. Points of greater military consequence might wisely be sacrificed to this object. But to permit the existence of any token (and in itself a trifle) which shall continually revive the memory of these scenes, does not seem to be prudent.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

Fort St. George, July 22d, 1806.

Copy of a Circular Letter addressed to the Officers commanding the Divisions of the Army, and to those in Command of the Subsidiary Forces at Hyderabad and Travancore.

TO THE OFFICER COMMANDING.

SIR,

THE result of various investigations into the transactions which lately occurred at Vellore, has proved to the Commander in Chief that designing persons have attempted to persuade the Native Troops, that the Turban lately ordered in lieu of that which they formerly wore, was intended to degrade them, and as an innovation on their Religious Tenets.

Groundless as this insinuation is, the Commander in Chief is determined to show that no such object was in contemplation, by an immediate recall of his Orders respecting Turbans, and you will immediately give Orders to the Officers commanding Corps in the Division under your command, to cause the Turbans to be made up on the formerly established pattern, unless the Native Officers and Men should desire to wear that which it was intended to adopt: in which case they may be permitted to do so.

The Commander in Chief also directs that you (by Letter to Officers commanding Corps and Stations) convey his Orders to cancel the 10th Paragraph of the 11th Section of the Standing Orders for Battalions of Native Infantry, dated the 13th March last, lest the directions it contains, although conformable to the long established practice of most Corps in the Army, should also be represented as a novel innovation on the customs of Cast.

(Signed)

P. A. AGNEW,
Adjutant-General of the Army.

Head Quarters, Vellore, July 17th, 1806.

TO THE TOWN MAJOR OF FORT ST. GEORGE.

SIR,

I INCLOSE a copy of a Letter I have addressed, by order of the Commander in Chief, to the Officers commanding Divisions of the Army; countermanding conditionally the directed alteration in the form of the Turbans of the Infantry Corps of the Army, and a Paragraph of Orders.

The Commander in Chief has directed me to transmit the inclosed to you, that with the Right Honourable the Governor's permission, to whose inspection he requests you will submit it, you may make those communications to the Officers commanding Corps in the Garrison of Fort St. George, which he has directly made to the other Corps of the Army.

(Signed)

P. A. AGNEW,
Adjutant-General of the Army.

Vellore, July 18th, 1806.

MR. PETRIE'S MINUTE.

SINCE the discussion which took place in Council to-day, I have read the Minute of the Right Honourable the President upon the effects which may be produced by the Circular Instructions to Officers commanding Stations, relative to the new Turban; and although I admit, as I did in the short Minute which I wrote in Council, that the Instructions are obnoxious to the observations of the Right Honourable the President, yet I am still of opinion that nothing should have been recorded on this subject until we had a personal communication with the Commander in Chief, who may be expected at the Presidency in the course of to-morrow. I beg leave to repeat what I said in the short Minute before alluded to (withdrawn as no longer applicable), that I highly approved of the candid and delicate manner in which the Right Honourable the President opened the subject to the Council.

July 22nd, 1806.

(Signed)

WM. PETRIE.

MR. STRANGE'S MINUTE.

HAVING perused the Minute of the Right Honourable the President, together with that of Mr. Petrie of this date, on the subject of the Circular Letter addressed by the Commander in Chief to the Officers commanding Divisions, it is impossible for me not to concur in the general sentiment expressed by both, as to the questionable tendency of the second paragraph of that Letter. I feel also, in common with Mr. Petrie, the desirableness of a personal communication with his Excellency upon every point that can occur, resulting from the late unhappy events, upon which our deliberations are at present principally employed, and upon the one in question in particular. But, consistently with the opinion I entertain of highly probable and dangerous consequences, as distinctly specified by the Right Honourable the President, I do not think I can justify referring the effect of it beyond tomorrow, in the expectation of the arrival of the Commander in Chief at the Presidency.

*Fort St George,
July 22nd, 1806.*

(Signed)

JAMES STRANGE.

 COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S MINUTE.

I FIND that the Right Honourable the President, with the concurrence of Council, conceive that the late Order published upon the Subject of Turbans does not completely do away their adoption, but by leaving it to the free choice of a Sepoy Battalion to make them up or not, may tend to revive discussions or even ill feeling on the point. I confess I think the Order, as expressed, ought to gratify their feelings, if they have any of a direct nature upon the circumstance, more than any other; but the argument one way or the other is so trifling, according to my best consideration, that, with the greatest pleasure I am ready to alter to any terms more approved, and which it may be supposed will carry with them the best effect.

However, I can never quit this subject, brought forward in any shape, without expressing my persuasion that the Turban, unconnected with artifice or machination, weighs not a straw in the scale of the present agitation, and that our chief attention should be directed to the dissolution of the foundations of imputed danger.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieutenant-General.

Madras, July 23d, 1806.

IT being unanimously agreed (under the reservation stated in the Minute of the Commander in Chief) that it will be advisable that the revocation of the Order on the subject of the Turbans should be rendered unqualified, it is resolved, that the Commander in Chief be requested to give the necessary Orders for that purpose.

(i)

IN COUNCIL.

THE President recommends the immediate appointment of a Commission for the purpose of investigating the causes of the late events at Vellore, and proposes that it shall consist of the following Members :

President,
Major-Gen. PATER.

Lieut.-Col. DODSWORTH.	} Members {	N. WEBBE, Esq.
Major DOWSE.		J. H. D. OGILVIE, Esq.

Approved and resolved accordingly.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PATER AND MEMBERS.

GENTLEMEN,

IN consequence of the recent distressing event which has occurred in the Fortress of Vellore, The Right Honourable the Governor in Council deems it essentially necessary that an immediate and strict Inquiry should be instituted for the purpose of ascertaining the cause to which this extraordinary occurrence is imputable.

2. His Lordship in Council has therefore been pleased to appoint you to a Commission for the purpose of conducting this Investigation; and it is his Lordship's desire that you will accordingly proceed to Vellore, and take immediate means for ascertaining the circumstances which led to the Mutiny of the Troops in that Garrison on the night of the 9th instant.

3 As his Lordship in Council attaches much importance to this Inquiry, his Lordship is desirous that you will lose as little time as may be practicable, consistently with the accuracy of your proceedings, in the completion of it; and in order that you may have such insight as is at present possessed by his Lordship in Council, relative to the subject, I am directed to inclose for your information the accompanying Copies of Official Reports which have been received from the Officers whose situations at Vellore may be supposed to have afforded them the means of giving an accurate account of the circumstances which occurred.

4. The Judge Advocate General will assist in conducting the proceedings of the Commission.

5. The Commission are authorized to administer an Oath to such witnesses as they may judge necessary.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

(Signed)

GEORGE BUCHAN,
Chief Secretary to Government.

Fort St. George, July 12th, 1806.

(j)

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION

MY LORD,

IN conformity to the Orders of your Lordship in Council, appointing us a Commission for the purpose of ascertaining the circumstances which led to the Mutiny of the Troops in the Garrison of Vellore on the night of the 9th July, we repaired to that Station, and on the 21st commenced our Enquiries, which we have continued down to this day.

We were naturally led to commence our investigations with an Inquiry into the general state of the Garrison at the time of the Mutiny. We find that the Garrison was composed of Two Battalions of Sepoys (the 1st of the 1st, and the 2nd of the 23rd^a) and a Detachment from His Majesty's 69th Regiment of about 370 Rank and File.

The only material occurrence which had recently taken place in regard to the Troops, was the issue of a new Turband to the Army, and a General Order by the Commander in Chief of the 13th of March last. The Order for the Turband had been notified to the Troops in Garrison about the Months of April or May last. The 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment, N. Infantry, were then composing part of the Garrison, and appear to have indicated great dissatisfaction at the fashion of the Turband, as too nearly resembling, in their apprehension, a European Hat. This Battalion had been removed some weeks previous to the Mutiny, and replaced by the 2nd of the 23rd.

In our examination of the Officers commanding these two Corps, we could not find that any dissatisfaction had been expressed to them by their Sepoys, against the receipt of the Turband, which, though not actually issued, was making up for both Corps.

It is sufficiently evident, however, from the testimony of various witnesses, that the Turband was highly offensive to the prejudices of the Sepoys, however much they may have concealed their feelings in that respect from their Officers. It does not appear that there was any thing in the materials of which the Turband was composed particularly objectionable, it being made, as formerly, of Broad-cloth, covering an Iron Frame, with the exception of a Cotton Tuft, made to resemble a Feather, and a leather Cockade. This last article appears indeed to have been disliked by the Sepoys, but the material and leading objection respected the shape, which, as before stated, they compared to that of a *Topce*, or European Hat. It is sufficiently evident that the shape of the Turband cannot be said to bear any resemblance to a Hat, although it does indeed to the leather Caps lately introduced into His Majesty's European Regiments.

It appears that different alterations in Dress had lately been introduced in the Sepoy Corps, such as Stocks and Waistcoats. By a late Order of his Excellency the Commander in Chief, of the 13th March 1806, Section XI paragraph 10 — "It is ordered by the Regulations, that a Native Soldier shall not mark his face to denote his Cast, nor wear Ear-rings, when dressed in his Uniform; and it is further directed, that at all Parades, and upon all Duties, every Soldier of the Battalion shall be clean shaved on the chin. It is directed also, that uniformity shall be preserved in regard to the quantity and shape of the hair upon the upper lip, as far as may be practicable."

This Order had been received by the two Corps at Vellore; but the particular paragraph had not been communicated officially to them. One of the Officers then in command of one of the Battalions (the late Lieut.-Col M'Kenas, who was killed in the Mutiny) had resolved not to communicate it to his Sepoys, as he was convinced that it would be the cause of great dissatisfaction. This information we obtained from his Adjutant, Lieut Coombe. The men, however, seem to have got some intelligence of what was intended for we find that the

* With exception of 460 on command.

apprehension of their Whiskers being cut off, was one of the causes which led to the Mutiny, as assigned by them; and we have no reason to doubt of the repugnancy which they must have felt at such a measure.

But however genuine the dislike to the Turband may have been amongst the Troops, there is reason to believe that this circumstance was caught at by others to sow dissatisfaction against our Government.

The families of the late Tippoo Sultan appear to have been removed to the Fortress of Vellore, as a place of security and strength, soon after the fall of Seringapatam, and a numerous train of attendants (chiefly, we believe, Mussulmen) had followed the fortune of the Princes, and were settled in the Pettah and vicinity of the Fort.

The casual dissatisfaction among the Troops appears to have furnished to the Princes the idea of turning that circumstance to their own advantage. The dissatisfaction arose out of a Religious Prejudice, and was therefore the readier converted into a common cause.

Many circumstances favour the belief of the intention of the Mutiny being known, for some time before it took place, to some of the people of the Palace, and in particular to the Prince Mouez u Deen.

One evidence (Baba Saib, Sepoy) speaks of the intention of a general insurrection having been communicated to him previous to the Mutiny by one of the Prince's people. Connected with this point, we must notice the deposition of Meerza Cheerudmund, a native of Delhi, one admitted into the presence of Mouez u Deen, and related to him by family connexion, who told him, about ten days before the Mutiny took place, that "he should be out in a few days." We do not find, on enquiry of Lieutenant-Colonel Marriott, that any exception attaches to the character of this Witness; and are therefore inclined to give great weight to what he says; nor is this diminished from its being but a hint which the Prince dropped. The observation conveyed to the Witness, he says, the idea of some mischief being in view.

We find from the testimony of several Witnesses, that an Oath had been taken by a great number of the Sepoys of both Battalions, and a considerable proportion of the Native Officers, to Three Points:—First, Secrecy; Second, the Rejection of the Turband, and, Thirdly, the Re-establishment of the Mussulman Government in the family of the late Tippoo Sultan.—It appears from the evidence of Shaik Nutter, Sepoy of the First Battalion of the First Regiment, that it was Jemaul u Deen, the foster-brother of Mouez u Deen, who first made the Palace people acquainted with the intention of the Sepoys to mutiny, and that he held forth to them a promise of an increase of pay from the Prince Mouez u Deen, and particular advantages to Subidar Shaik Adam—that the Prince expected immediate assistance of four or five hundred men from the Pettah, and after-assistance from different parts of the Country.

The above is the only material information we have been able to procure of any actual communications with the Palace previous to the Mutiny, nor could even this be procured but under peculiar circumstances. The Witness had, on his first examination on a former day, July 29th, declared that he did not know of his own knowledge that any of the Palace people were acquainted with the Mutiny; but on further examination (on the 9th August) it being explained to him that the pardon promised him was conditional only on his making a full discovery of all circumstances, within his knowledge, connected with the Mutiny, and our doubts of his having made a full communication on his first examination, he then made the declarations above quoted.

Jemaul u Deen and Fakeer Mahomed were questioned, under an offer of pardon, as to the truth of what Shaik Nutter had discovered, but they both denied all knowledge of the circumstances.

Shaik Nutter, it is to be observed, identified the person of Jemaul u Deen from amongst upwards of twenty persons who were produced, to prove that he distinctly knew the man he alluded to.

Carrying on our remarks on the occurrences previous to the Mutiny, we find from the evidence of Lieutenant-Colonel Marriott, that on the days of the 8th or 9th July, the Prince

Mouez u Deen particularly desired that he might be allowed to have a *Murdanah*, or the women excluded from his public rooms, and his male servants allowed to remain with him during the night—an indulgence which is allowed to them only during the Mohurram Feast, when they fast all day, and are obliged to eat at night. He also requested permission for Hyder Hussain Cawn, his first-cousin, to be allowed to pass the night at his house. Colonel Marriott refused him both these requests, as being irregular, and as they would lead to form a precedent for himself and the other Princes to make similar requests. Another reason for his suspicions of Mouez u Deen was, the earnest manner in which he requested to be allowed to purchase a horse, which Lieutenant-Colonel Marriott also refused, on account of the heavy debts he had already incurred. Finding that Colonel Marriott would not listen to him, he urgently requested that he might be allowed to see and try the horse, and he was brought into the Fort accordingly for that purpose, and this, Colonel Marriott adds, was the same horse that was found ready saddled on the arrival of the Dragoons at Mouez u Deen's door.

It appeared that the night of the 9th July had been set apart for celebrating the nuptials of one of the Princesses, Noor ul Nissam Begum, daughter of the late Tippoo Sultan by and sister to the Prince Mohea u Deen, with a person of the name of Syed Nizam u Deen, a Native of Mysore, who had lately come from the Country of Cuddapah for that purpose—and that a great concourse of people had assembled from different quarters of the Country on the occasion.

We shall not think it necessary to retrace the circumstances of the Massacre which took place during that night (the particulars of which have already been pretty accurately reported to your Lordship in Council by different Officers) further than noticing the share which the people of the Palace appeared to have taken in the transaction.

Different Witnesses have borne testimony to the activity of the followers of the Palace during the time of the Mutiny, by assisting in getting out the guns; in laying them, in encouraging the Sepoys to destroy the Europeans, and in actually doing so themselves in some instances. The flag of the late Tippoo Sultan was hoisted upon the Garrison flag-staff by the Sepoys in conjunction with the followers of the Palace. The Princes Mohea u Deen and his brother Mouez u Deen presented themselves to the Sepoys, ordered refreshments of beetle, &c. to be given them, and Mouez u Deen is said to have presented the Son of the late Commandant Syed Goffoor with a sword, ordering him at the same time to go and take possession of the Hill Fort of Vellore. The encouragement given to the Sepoys by the above Princes appears to us to be sufficiently confirmed by the general result of the evidence, although not very distinctly spoken to by many of the Witnesses.

It is material to observe, that Mouez u Deen acknowledged to Colonel Marriott that the flag had come out of his house, but that the Sepoys had plundered it with many other things. Lieutenant-Colonel Marriott enquired how he came to have such a thing, and he said he bought it of Nowragee, the Persee merchant, during Colonel Doveton's command. The flag is said to have been purchased at the Sales subsequent to the fall of Seringapatam. It was produced before us, and appears to be an old one, bearing the late Sultan's insignia, a sun in the centre, with green tyger-stripes on a red field. On our examination of Nowragee, the Persee merchant, he denied that he had ever sold either a flag to the Princes, or cloth of the same kind of which it was made.

The eagerness with which the Sepoys and men of the Palace betook themselves to plunder the effects of the Officers, and to escape out of the Fort with their booty, tended in our opinion to weaken the general effect of the Insurrection, and to prevent, happily, much of the consequences to have been apprehended. This defection of the Mutineers, joined to the early assistance given by the 19th Dragoons and 7th Regiment, and details of Native Cavalry by Colonel Gillespie (under circumstances too brilliant ever to be forgotten), prevented the Fort from falling entirely into their possession.

It appeared to us proper to give the four elder Princes an opportunity of offering any explanation of their conduct which they might be able or willing to afford, and we accordingly went over to their different houses for that purpose. We stated to Mouez u Deen and Mohea u Deen, that they were implicated in the transactions of the 10th, but to the other two, we

only observed, that we were ready to receive any information they were disposed to offer regarding that affair. They all four denied any previous knowledge of, or participation in, the transaction.

The Son of Syed Goffoor, who was so repeatedly charged by different witnesses of having taken an active part in the transactions of that night, was called before us, and distinctly questioned as to the several allegations against him, all of which he denied.

It did not seem to us necessary to enter into a particular investigation of the guilt imputed to the different followers of the Princes, by questioning the several individuals themselves, as the purpose of our Mission was not to convict particular persons, which could only be done by a regular trial, but to ascertain the general facts and circumstances of the transaction; so far as regards the followers of the Palace having many of them taken an active part in the Mutiny, the facts are too broad and strong to be mistaken, the particular share individuals may have taken is a matter for future discrimination.

We had the honour to suggest to your Lordship in Council, the propriety of offering a pecuniary Reward for a full discovery of the cause or causes which originally led to the Mutiny; but, as your Lordship in Council seemed to feel that the measure was objectionable, we have not as yet availed ourselves of the discretion allowed us, of proposing such Rewards as may appear likely to lead to any useful discovery. We have been the rather inclined to this, because we understand the Officer commanding the Garrison is vested with powers to that effect, who would, of course, communicate to your Lordship, or to us, any information he might receive; and because we are aware that many persons would repair to an individual for that purpose, who would not venture to come before a Commission (the object of whose meetings is more generally known) to give evidence, in the present state of the public mind.

We received from the Officer commanding the Garrison a Paper of private intelligence, being the confession of certain persons now under sentence of death. We did not, however, think that the evidence given under such circumstances, was of a nature proper to be recorded on the Proceedings of a Commission ordered to examine Witnesses on oath, however important in itself, and adapted to Political purposes. and as the Paper is already before Government, we see many reasons why we should neither remark on it, nor balance our own proceedings by it.

The object of our Mission is "to ascertain the cause to which the Mutiny is imputable." It is not easy to calculate upon the motives which may have actuated a large body of men, composed of different Casts, Religions, and Countries, and acting for a period of time sufficient to admit of new feelings and interest, calculated to divert the original impression to a different object.

There are, however, two principal causes which appear to us to have led to the Mutiny: the late innovations in the Dress and appearance of the Sepoys, and the Residence of the Family of the late Tippoo Sultan at Vellore. We shall beg leave to submit our reasons on each of these heads; and first in regard to the Dress.

The article of Dress is, both with the Hindoos and the Mahomedans, an indication of their Cast, and a badge of their respective distinctions and places in society; and when it is recollected how obstinately the Indians of all descriptions adhere to their Customs, and with what difficulty the Natives were brought to adopt many parts of their present Military Dress, it will not appear surprising that some of the late innovations in that respect were offensive to their feelings.

The Sepoys appear to have felt, that the wearing of the new Tarband would make them come to be considered as Europeans, and would have removed them from the society and intercourse of their own Casts.

We did not think it material to ascertain how far every article of Dress which they have complained of was repugnant to their religious tenets, or unreasonable in itself—prejudices would cease to be so could they be regulated by reason.

We shall not dwell particularly upon that part of the Order which respected the effacing from the forehead the Marks of Cast, as it has not been specified to us as a cause of grievance, though one of the Battalions appears to have previously carried it into execution; we may be

allowed, however, to suppose that it was not without its effect upon the minds of individuals ; in the same Corps the Turband was not complained of, yet we know that it led to the Mutiny.

These distinctions of Cast add to the personal importance of the individual with society, and create a sense of honour which operates more strongly than the fear of punishment in the prevention of crimes.

In this Country the prejudices of the conquered have always triumphed over the aims of the conqueror ; and have subsisted amidst all the revolutions and shocks to which the Empire has been subjected, any innovation therefore in that respect must be calculated to call forth their feelings, and the more trivial the object required to be sacrificed, the stronger, in our opinion, would the reluctance be to make it. Nothing could appear more trivial to the Public Interests than the length of the hair on the upper lip of a Sepoy ; yet to the individual himself the shape and fashion of the Whisker is a badge of his Cast, and an article of his Religion ; and the sanctity in which this article is held has occasioned Revolutions in different Eastern Nations rather than suffer it to be violated.

We shall now remark on the second cause assigned, *viz.* the Residence of the Families of the late Tippoo Sultan at Vellore.

Accommodations were here provided for them, nearly resembling a palace in magnificence, and an establishment allowed them on a very extensive scale of liberality : their followers had emigrated in great numbers to Vellore, and husbands for the Princesses were allowed to come from different quarters of the Country. These persons naturally brought along with them their former attachments and prejudices ; and the interests of Seringapatam were transplanted with its inhabitants to the Carnatic : speaking the same language, and following the same religion, connections were easily formed ; and amongst men who were not much occupied with the engagements of trade or business, schemes of power and ambition would naturally occur to those who had been born to enjoy them.

Under other circumstances, the Turband, &c. might have proved offensive to the Sepoys ; but when we look to some former Insurrections amongst the Troops, and remember (and it falls within the personal knowledge of some of us) the civility with which the men distinguish their Officers, and the point of honour which they seemed to feel in doing so, we cannot but think that the outrages on the late occasion were of foreign growth, and could only have been inspired by a barbarous Enemy.

On the whole, we draw from the Evidence now before us, the following conclusions .

That the late Innovation as to the Dress and Appearance of the Sepoys was the leading cause of the Mutiny : and the other was, the Residence of the Family of the late Tippoo Sultan at Vellore.

All of which is humbly submitted by,

My Lord,

&c. &c.

(Signed)

Vellore, 9th August, 1806.

J. PATER, President,
&c. Members of Commission.

(k)

PRESIDENT'S MINUTE.

IT being expedient that the Gentlemen composing the Commission held at Vellore should repair to their stations without loss of time, I recommend that the Commission be dissolved.

As the Report of the Commission as to the Causes of the Mutiny has the entire concurrence of my opinion, and as the Court of Directors will naturally require our sentiments upon this important subject, I beg leave to move, that it be resolved to confirm the opinion of the Commission, and to approve of the manner in which the Report has been drawn up.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

Fort St. George, 14th August, 1806.

A Resolution was passed agreeably to this Minute.

(1)

PRESIDENT'S MINUTE.

ALTHOUGH some parts of the Letters and Inclosures of the Commander in Chief under date the 20th July, seem to require remarks and explanation from me, I deem it notwithstanding more advisable, under all the circumstances, to observe silence, and to reserve such opinions as it may be absolutely incumbent upon me to give, till the Report of the Committee shall have been received; there is, however, one subject in that Letter relative to a Note annexed by the Commander in Chief to Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes's Answers to certain Queries put to him by Sir John Cradock, which, as it is about to be transmitted to Bengal, does not admit of being entirely passed over.

The Note is to the following purport:

“Whatever Regulations were adopted for the Army were submitted to Government, and remained many weeks in their possession for examination, and were returned approved.”

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK.”

Messrs. Petrie and Strange, as well as myself, being conscious of our entire ignorance of the existence of the particular Order in question, and feeling also that the specific manner in which the reference had been made, relieved us from all responsibility attaching to it; we conceived that the Commander in Chief would prefer the omission of the Note, rather than the transmission of it, accompanied by our comments. Under this idea, our Letter dated the 19th July was written to the Commander in Chief. Sir J. Cradock, in reply, has stated, “In respect to the Note at the bottom of Colonel Forbes's Letter, I cannot consent that it should not appear before the Supreme Government. In all cases, the exact display is best, and the due inferences are better drawn.”

The fact, as stated by the Commander in Chief, “That the Regulations were submitted to the Government; that they were many weeks in the possession of the Government; and were finally returned approved;” is perfectly true: and the conclusion from this statement unaccompanied by explanation would unite the Governor in Council with the Commander in Chief in a full participation of the responsibility which may attach to those Orders.

On the ground of responsibility, I must state my confidence that the affairs of this Presidency, and indeed of the Empire at large, have not suffered by any timidity of action on the part of this Government, nor by any considerations of a personal nature. I hope it will appear that the general welfare has always been our main object, and that we even have made ourselves accountable when the strict line of our duty would have authorized inaction: on the other hand, I cannot permit myself to consent to share either the merit or demerit of transactions in which I cannot feel that I have been a party.

It will be necessary to go somewhat back, in order to place in a distinct view the feelings entertained by the Governor in Council upon this particular point.

It may be recollected, that so early as March 1805, the Commander in Chief submitted to the Board, his opinion of the indispensable necessity of bringing into a general view, the several Orders and Regulations that comprehend the Military System. It is stated, “The

“ Commander in Chief has it only in contemplation to reduce into one view the several Orders *in Force*, and which are *already sanctioned* by Government. but should any slight alteration appear obviously necessary, or it be found requisite to introduce a few circumstances of Discipline or interior Economy of the later practice in England, such *new Matter will be distinguished* in the Manuscript that will be submitted for the final approbation of Government.”

This compilation was accordingly prepared, and presented to the Board in January 1806, together with a Minute from the Commander in Chief, in which Sir John Cradock observes, “ In this compilation the existing Orders have been considered, as far as is consistent with a due preservation of their spirit and meaning, and to them I have added such others as I consider calculated to improve the service, &c.”

“ The whole is comprised in 27 Sections, alphabetically arranged; and the additional Orders to which I request the attention of the Board, as requiring the sanction of Government, are as follow ”

Upon reference to the enumeration of these additional Orders, it will be found that the paragraph 10 of Section XI which has since been revoked, is not included.

The Government passed a Resolution approving of the compilation, and expressing a favourable opinion of the mode in which this laborious work had been completed by the Deputy Adjutant-General, to whom it had been officially intrusted.

The Detail here given would seem to preclude the necessity of any observation. The assurance of the exact nature of the compilation from the Officer officially charged by our superior Authorities with the superintendence of these details, was entitled to our entire belief, and the perusal of near One Hundred and Fifty Folio Sheets of Regimental Orders, about Drill, Discipline, and Dress, already asserted to be in usage, and sanctioned, could not have been required of me, and formed no part of my duty.

What I was really called upon to do, I conscientiously performed, by examining that part of the Orders said to be New, to which the Commander in Chief drew the attention of the Board, and required its sanction. To those additional Orders alone could our approval be reasonably understood to have been given: to those was our approbation asked; to those alone was it given. They, as well as I recollect, were for the most part of a financial nature, and could not be carried into effect without the sanction of Council. The remainder consisted of Military Details actually under execution by the authority of the Commander in Chief. The Governor in Council did their duty in revoking the Order when it came to their knowledge.

As we have seen the great importance of the Dress of the Soldiers in this Country, and of the dangerous consequences which may follow any innovation upon it, I would beg leave to recommend that a Resolution be passed, that no alteration whatever in the Dress of the Soldier, or in the external marks and fashions of his Cast, should take place without the previous sanction of Government. I would recommend that this Resolution should be transmitted to the Commander in Chief, in order that it may form a Record of the Adjutant-General's Office.

(Signed)

W BENTINCK.

Fort St. George, July 25th, 1806.

(m)

Extract from Mr. Petrie's Minute, dated July 29th, 1806.

“ IN concurring with the Right Honourable the President in his Minute of the 25th Instant, and in disclaiming all previous knowledge of the Orders for introducing certain alterations in the Dress and distinguishing Marks of the Sepoys, I beg leave to explain

that I do not thereby, in the most remote degree, mean to impute blame to the Commander in Chief, whose vigilance in command stands altogether unimpeached, under every circumstance of the late unhappy events."

Extract from Mr. Strange's Minute, dated July 31, 1806.

" AS an individual Member of Council, I deem it sufficient for me to aver, in concurrence with Mr. Petrie, and for the reasons detailed by the Right Honourable the President, that in sanctioning the General Code, we remained unapprised of the particular Orders."

(n)

TO MAJOR PIERCE, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

IN addition to what I addressed to you the other day, in respect to explanation concerning Orders that have been much adverted to —

I am now obliged to press the subject further, from a communication I have received from his Lordship in Council, wherein it is stated that the attention of Government was not drawn to that paragraph, because I had promised that whenever there was the slightest alteration from the former Orders, such difference should appear distinguished; and that "this Order was not noted."

The remark from Government is very just; and I am required to ask from you the statement of the case, for it must be in perfect recollection that my instructions to you were, "to mark in red-ink" every deviation from the last Book of Regulations.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieutenant-General.

July 26, 1806.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour of replying to your Excellency's Letter of to-day's date, by stating, to the best of my recollection, what occurred on the subject of revising the Regulations of the Service.

When your Excellency was pleased to express to me your intention, that the Regulations then considered those of the Service, though mostly obsolete, should be revised, you accompanied it by instructions that the Regulations to be framed should, as far as might be practicable, be assimilated to the customs and usages of His Majesty's Service; your Excellency observing, that you would assign to the Government your motive for adopting such as were in force in His Majesty's Service, in preference to what might hitherto have been the practice of this Service, in every instance that required the confirmation of Government.

I regret that I cannot call to my remembrance your Excellency's particular injunction to note every deviation and addition *in red ink*, but merely in general terms, that they should be brought to the notice of Government; and such as were not founded upon existing Orders, and appeared to me to require the confirmation of Government, were accordingly pointed out in your Excellency's Minute, that accompanied the proposed compilation when submitted to the Council.

Under the generally-adopted opinion in this Service, that the Commander in Chief is vested with the power of regulating the Discipline and Detail of the Army, in which I had ever supposed to be included its Dress as well as its Appearance, from having invariably observed that all Orders on those subjects proceeded from that Authority, I did not understand it to be expected that the paragraph in question, as relating solely to a point of etiquette connected with the Military Appearance of a Soldier, should be brought to the notice of Government, and doing so, it was consequently omitted.

In corroboration of what I have now stated, I beg leave to refer to the first paragraph of your Excellency's Minute, that was laid before Government, with the revised Code, which, as general Regulations for a Service at large, necessarily comprised Orders emanating from different Authorities.

I have the honour to be, &c
(Signed)

FRED PIERCE,
Dep. Adj-Gen

Madras, July 26, 1806.

(o)

MINUTE OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

I HAVE viewed with extreme concern some Papers lately transmitted from the Supreme Government upon the subject of the Mutiny at Vellore, as they contain sentiments of a very opposite nature from those I entertain, and have expressed, and if I am to yield to their reasoning and force, I cannot but feel that all the opinions I have given, and the measures I advised, are subject to disapprobation.

While I am aware it is the acknowledged duty of this Government, and all its Members, to pay implicit obedience to the orders of the Supreme Authority, and not to hesitate upon any act enjoined, yet I trust it will not be considered that I overstep the bounds of inferior station, as a Member of this Council, if I still express my doubt "upon opinions," though they proceed from the highest and most respected source. The events of the present hour are not alone considered, but futurity may demand the retrospect of past proceedings and delivered sentiments.

Under this impression, I take the liberty to record the copy of a Statement I thought it my duty to send to the Authorities in England, of the Mutiny at Vellore, which, arising in an Army entrusted to my command, cannot fail to give me perpetual solicitude.

I rest my judgment upon the variety and extent of evidence I have seen, the advantage of much local information, and the concurrent testimony of the Army, not unsupported by the public voice.

The Report I submit is the issue of direct evidence and official document. It is not liable to disproof.

The whole question is now before the Publick

It comprehends but Two points. Was the introduction of the Turband the original cause of all mischief? Was it just, or otherwise, to remove the Mysore Family from Vellore? The first is in all the warmth of argument, and perhaps must await, for proof, the lapse of time; but the other, "that presses upon the character of this Government," is easier answered, without depending for support upon the acclamation that urged the measure of removal (for a wise Administration must often withstand popular impulse): I would give as my reply, "That I believe every man in India, a friend to the British Government, would object to their return."

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieutenant-General.

Madras, October 25th, 1806.

THE late unhappy event at Vellore has led to wide diversity of opinions ; and arguments may have been so conducted, as perhaps rather to disguise truth, than convey information

The object of the following Statement is therefore to recur to original circumstances, to fix a date prior to the fatal catastrophe on the 10th July, and to give a plain narrative of transactions, each step of which is accompanied by official documents.

The explanation so much involves the acts of the Commander in Chief at Madras, that it is necessary a great part of the detail should proceed in his name.

It is stated, and to a certain degree believed, that the introduction of a new Turband in the Native Army, an Order to prohibit the Marks of Cast on the forehead of the Sepoys on parade, with innovations upon their former Dress, in the obligation to wear stocks, white waistcoats, feathers, pantaloons, &c had created so much disaffection in their minds, as produced the Massacre at Vellore. But the question chiefly rests on the Turband, the other circumstances are only accounted auxiliaries ; for though the restriction upon the Marks might naturally be thought the prevailing point, yet through the long course of examination it scarcely appears in operation.

Vide Colonel
Agnew's, and
Major Pierce's
Letters

A Syed, and
Rajahpoot.

From great variety in the Turband of the Army, and the one generally in use being ill-suited to convenience, and very heavy, upon the representation of the Adjutant-General and the Deputy, it came into contemplation to direct a common pattern for the whole service, and the arrangement was left to these officers, of whose experience and local knowledge the Commander in Chief could entertain no doubt. At length, Turbands made up under their direction were presented to him upon the heads of Sepoys introduced for that purpose, and they seemed entitled to commendation.

The business of making them up proceeded universally, and without remark, till attention was excited by a spirit of opposition in the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment at Vellore, who declared that the Turbands were offensive, and infringed upon their Casts.

As circumstances of extreme insubordination marked the conduct of the corps at that period, and there appeared nothing that could justify the supposition that any real objection did exist, it seemed required that measures to support discipline should be immediately adopted, and some of the ringleaders were confined, and sent to Madras for trial.

Court of In-
quiry, 14th
May, 1806—
Vellore

Court of In-
quiry.

At that moment, too fully illustrated by subsequent acts, the conduct of the Native Commissioned Officers was most suspicious ; not one appeared active in his duty, they all seemed to enjoy the rising discontents ; and at the same time, to strengthen evil circumstance and ignorance, they all declared the Turband free from objection, and persisted in the same avowal upon the subsequent Court of Inquiry at Vellore.

It is in evidence that the first opposition to the introduction of the Turband, by the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment at Vellore, was manifested before they had ever seen it ; and that an agreement had been made between the 1st Battalion of the 1st Regiment, quartered also in Vellore, and the 2nd Battalion of the same Corps, marching past, not to wear it, though in equal ignorance of its appearance, formation, or materials.

Lieut-Colonel
Forbes's Evi-
dence.

To perfect the view that the revolt was not a resistance to an article of Dress, that in the wound it gave to Casts or prejudices might in this country give birth to acts the most extravagant—that it was not an explosion of injured feelings, that might destroy every principle of allegiance or humanity, but that silent secret treason was the object ; the chief Conspirator, Shaik Cossim Jemidai, in the 1st Regiment, a few days previous to the insurrection, upon being questioned by his Commanding Officer if any dissatisfaction existed, offered, "*in the presence of the other Native Officers,*" to place the Koran on his head, (the most solemn appeal to truth,) and swear that there was none, and that the whole Corps were forward to wear the Turband.

The Court of Inquiry established by the Commander in Chief at Vellore as he proceeded to Mysore, consisted of Lieutenant-Colonel M'Kerras, Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes, and Lieutenant-Colonel Marriott, the two former commanding Battalions, and the latter the Paymaster to Tippoo's family—officers distinguished for their knowledge of the language and the Native customs ; and the proceedings will fully evince that no objection to the Turband was

then discoverable, and the private opinion those Officers were requested to give upon the subject to the Commander in Chief, a preference to the former Turband in many particulars appears, and a declaration that in no shape it interfered with Cast or prejudice. Attention is only directed to the alteration of some tape, and trifles of that nature.

Vide private
Report, 26th
May, 1806.

The Commander in Chief then proceeded to Mysore, and gave directions for the Trial of the Prisoners before a Native Court Martial at the Presidency.

At each Trial evidence was produced from persons of the highest Cast, that the Turband was free from any objection whatsoever. The Prisoners were found guilty, and sentenced to corporal punishment.

Vide the
Trials

The Commander in Chief, being anxious that Government should be acquainted with every circumstance, and feeling that his absence from the Presidency might lead to ignorance of the real state of the case, directed the Adjutant-General to lay all the Proceedings of the Trials before the Right Honourable the Governor, and follow such measures as the Council might please to direct. The result was, that two of the Ringleaders of the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Regiment were punished, and the rest, upon their apparent contrition, pardoned.

Vide Order to
the Adjutant-
General, 12th
and 20th June.

No further intelligence reached the Commander in Chief at Nundydroog till the latter end of June, when he received a very impressive representation from an experienced and able Officer, that the Turband had occasioned great discontent in the Army, and earnestly recommended a repeal of the Order.

The Commander in Chief at once adopted the resolution of confiding his embarrassment to the Government, and submitted the following secret reference to the Right Honourable the Governor in Council.

“ (Secret.)

“ *Nundydroog, June 29th, 1806.*

“ MY LORD,

“ I MUST have recourse to your Lordship's judgment, and that of the Council, to relieve me from great anxiety and embarrassment upon the subject of the Turbands, the full particulars of which case are so well known to your Lordship, and upon the proceedings, from my absence, I have already requested your Lordship's personal direction.

“ The introduction of this Turband originated from the advice and under the superintendence of Colonel Agnew, the Adjutant-General, and Major Pierce, the Deputy Adjutant-General; and as an alteration from the former one appeared wanting, I thought I could not confide so simple a matter to better hands, or Officers of more local experience.

“ I have the strongest reasons to suppose, that almost universal objection arises against the Turband, and though force and punishment may overcome individual opposition, yet the firm dislike does not abate, and the frequent recurrence of severity may produce, though it may be remote, bad consequences.

“ I am as aware as the human mind can possess the sentiment, that opposition to Military and just authority cannot be yielded to, and that the attempt must be crushed in its earliest stage. This is the sole reasoning towards a British Soldier, and, were it purely a British case, I should neither feel embarrassment, or should I thus trouble your Lordship in Council.

“ But upon the prejudices of India, the force of Cast, which in its various shape no European may perfectly comprehend, it is allowable even in a Soldier's mind to pause, and solicit the advice of the Head and his companions in the Government.

“ The question is not confined to the ignorant Soldier, it is the subject of conversation among the best-informed Officers, and my intelligence from Seringapatam, where there is a numerous garrison, is, that it is the common cry, *that the next attempt will be to make the Sepoys Christians.*

“ I lay before your Lordship, in confidence, a private Letter from Colonel Brunton, and the same sentiment prevails with many other moderate and discreet Officers.

“ Still it is my wish, and the best judgment I can apply to the untoward subject, to persevere and conquer prejudice, as perhaps the least evil, but where consequences may ensue of a disadvantageous nature, and even the source of our recruiting at stake, so difficult at all times, with due selection and effect, I am not satisfied in my own mind to persevere to the full extent, without recurrence to your Lordship’s advice, and the sanction of Government.

(Signed)

“ J F CRADOCK,
Lieutenant-General.”

The Commander in Chief thus endeavoured to unite Military principles with the strictest caution, and was prepared to follow such steps as the best information, and the sanction of the highest authority, should dictate

The Government honoured him with an answer, and proposed the issue of an Order to the Army. The determination was expressed to enforce the Turband, as the opposition arose from “ *ignorant clamour, unfounded on any principle*,” but, at the same time, to respect the Usages and Customs of the Native Troops on all occasions

Both appeared to the Commander in Chief highly proper, and calculated to produce the best remedy in a case of extreme embarrassment. The Order was not issued, as Government, with whom the decision remained, on account of the Commander in Chief’s absence from Madras, did not deem it necessary. The following are the most material Extracts from this Correspondence.

PUBLIC LETTER TO THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF.

“ July 4th, 1806

“ (Secret Department.)

“ IF there had been reason to suppose that the late change of Dress was liable to the objection of militating against the Religious Principles of the inhabitants of this Country, we should have had no hesitation in immediately recommending to your Excellency the relinquishment of the intention to establish the proposed change, but as it appears from the evidence taken in the late Enquiry at Vellore, that no objection of this nature exists, we certainly deem it advisable that the alternative of yielding to the clamour arising from an unfounded prejudice, should, if possible, be avoided.

(Signed)

“ W. BENTINCK.”

GENERAL ORDER BY GOVERNMENT.

“ July 4th, 1806.

“ THE Right Honourable the Governor in Council having been informed by his Excellency the Commander in Chief of the opposition which has, in some instances, been experienced in establishing an alteration which it was deemed expedient to adopt in the form of the Turband in use among the Native Corps of this Establishment, his Lordship in Council is led to express his extreme regret that any part of the Native Army, whose merits have been so frequently extolled and rewarded by this Government, could have suffered itself to be deluded by an unfounded clamour.

“ It will be in every instance the wish of the Right Honourable the Governor in Council, to evince a sacred regard for the Religious Principles of the Native Troops, as well as of all other inhabitants of this Country; but in the present case it appears, after the strictest enquiry, and according to the testimony of Natives of the highest Cast, that the

“ opposition which has been experienced in the late change of Turbands is destitute of any foundation in either the Law or usage of the Mahomedan or Hindoo Religions, and any persons who may persevere in that opposition cannot, in consequence, fail to be subjected to the severest penalties of military discipline.”

—
 “ (Secret)

“ *Nundydroog, July 9th, 1806.*

“ MY LORD,

“ I HAVE been much honoured this morning by the receipt of the Letter from your Lordship in Council, upon the subject of the Turbands, and feel myself peculiarly gratified by the transmission of the proposed Order by Government previous to its circulation.

“ I take the liberty to express my entire concurrence with the spirit and terms of the Order, as every way calculated to preserve just authority, and to allay any prejudices that may exist upon the imputed disregard to the rights attached to Cast, or ancient Custom. The point was of infinite embarrassment, and if any act was to be resorted to beyond the immediate and constant vindication of violated discipline, as it might arise, I conceive that an Order from Government of this nature would seem to promise the best effect.

“ I will confess, that by the present communication with Government, I have gained the object I had in view, which was, to receive from them an unreserved opinion as to the propriety of full coercion, should it prove necessary, but which, situated as this Country is, buried in the absurdities of Cast or prejudice, dear to them as existence, I was fearful to take a step of any doubt, without explicit knowledge and the sanction of Government.

“ Since I last had the honour to address your Lordship in Council, I have heard nothing more, which silence leads me to hope that the disinclination to the Turband has become more feeble, or, perhaps, that reports have been exaggerated. Under this view, it may be judicious to postpone the publication of the Order, either to let the subject fall to the ground, as no longer the interposition of Government is required, or to reassume the issue, as your Lordship in Council may determine by future event.

(Signed)

“ J. F. CRADOCK,
 Lieutenant-General.”

—
 The Commander in Chief has thus explicitly detailed all circumstances relative to the Turband, anterior to the 10th of July, that the public mind may form its judgment according to first principles, and not suffer undue impression from any course of event. The appellation of obnoxious Order may now be attached to the measure, but the public act of the Council, that declared the Turband free from objection, that imputed the opposition to “ *unfounded clamour*” and “ *groundless discontent*,” and the private act of the Right Honourable the Governor, who after deliberate enquiry, and at a late period, expressed his desire that his Corps of Fencibles should wear it, will surely have weight to recal the unmerited epithet, and re-instate original sentiment.

It is unnecessary to go through the painful recital of the atrocious Revolt and Massacre on the 10th of July at Vellore, the fatal occurrences are within universal information. They comprehend every case of disloyalty, treachery, and horror. The whole was planned with unequalled secrecy and concealment. The object was to destroy every European, and place a son of Tippoo at the head of a Moorish Government. With this view, letters were ready, or even were dispatched to the Mahrattas and to disaffected Chieftains at Cuddapah, in the Ceded Districts, and Vancatigherry, in the Carnatic, to excite a general hostility. Indiscriminate fury and slaughter raged for many hours, and wretches were seen tottering from the Hospital to partake in the bloody scene, whilst the British soldiers were dragged from the

Military Court
 of Inquiry.

Lieut-Colonel
Forbes's Re-
port

same asylum, and devoted to a deliberate death. Fatal instruction extended so far, that even the Sepoy boys armed themselves with their carbines of exercise, and lent their aid to the general destruction.

To what extent the calamity may have reached, it is impossible to say : most happily a body of Cavalry arrived from Arcot under the intrepid Colonel Gillespie, performed a military wonder, and regained possession of the Fortress, rescued the brave survivors of the 69th Regiment reduced to the last extremity, and closed this scene of cruelty and cowardice.

Vide Proclama-
tion of the
Commander in
Chief--Vellore,
14 July, and
other Papers
addressed to
Government

Upon the arrival of the Commander in Chief at Vellore, on the 3d morning after the dreadful event, it appeared to be the leading principle to conciliate and restore confidence, to banish apprehension or suspicions of every nature, and pursue the paths of justice and spirit,—while innocence was to be discovered from the mass of apparent crime, and protected with ardent zeal, the firm punishment of the guilty seemed equally necessary ; and the unparalleled outrage against the British name and existence was to be vindicated in the signal chastisement of the savage perpetrators. Against them alone was punishment to direct its just reprisal. Towards all others, policy, good principles, and judgments, seemed to dictate the full exertion of every former feeling of confidence and cordiality. The Indian Character would understand this distinction, and not confound the operation of generosity with apprehension.

The whole dispensation seemed to require the earliest practicable termination, that the progress of oblivion might commence.

These principles actuated the Commander in Chief from the beginning, while at Vellore, and still direct his conduct.

Before the active causes of the insurrection at Vellore are entered upon, it appears necessary that the Order to prohibit the Marks of Cast on Parade, and the wearing Ear-rings, &c. should be adverted to, and explanation given on this subject. The Commander in Chief has already delivered his opinions on this subject, and what belongs to a Statement of this nature is only to mark circumstances as they really are, and not to condemn or extenuate the alleged Usage of the Service, which does prevail on the Madras Establishment, and, it is stated, the Bengal also.

Captain Sydenham, the Resident at Hyderabad, writes in these terms :

“ Many Corps on the Madras Establishment, and almost all the Corps in Bengal, which are composed of Hindoos of the highest Cast, never use their distinguishing Marks on Duty. The Orders did not apply to the Mussulmans, who certainly were the most active both in receiving and exciting the unfavourable impressions which led to discontent ”

It had been found necessary to collect into one Code the several Regulations of the Military Service ; and the work was allotted, by the Order of Government, to the Deputy Adjutant-General of the Army, Major Pierce, an Officer of 25 years' experience in India, and who seemed in every respect most qualified for the task.

As a general instruction, the Commander in Chief directed Major Pierce to note with red ink all matter in the least different from former practice or usage, that, when the Book was submitted to Government for their sanction, attention might be attracted to any alteration.

When the Deputy Adjutant-General reported the work prepared, the Commander in Chief assembled the Adjutant-General Lieutenant-Colonel Agnew, the Quarter-Master-General Lieutenant-Colonel Orr, and the Deputy Adjutant-General Major Pierce, and the Regulations were read by himself on many successive days, and discussed paragraph by paragraph. When the Order in question, to prohibit the Marks of Cast, &c. under arms, appeared in its turn, it immediately attracted the Commander in Chief's attention, as impolitic interference with the Customs and Prejudices of the Inhabitants.

The Adjutant-General and the Deputy (on this day the Quarter-Master-General happened to be absent) assured the Commander in Chief, that it was the invariable practice of the Service, that in no well-regulated Corps was it ever permitted, and appealed to the Commander in Chief's personal observation among the Battalions he had inspected, whether he had remarked such distinctions. The Commander in Chief, as a stranger, and with an opinion only formed from books, could not oppose such arguments ; and, anxious to leave undisturbed the

usual course of a Sepoy Battalion, and instead of introducing, to resist innovation, he suffered the insertion of the Order. A few extracts of the Correspondence that has taken place, on this part of the subject, will place the question in the true point of view

LETTER FROM SIR J. F. CRADOCK TO COLONEL AGNEW.

July 15, 1806.

“ BUT upon the other points, the Abolition of the Marks of Cast from the forehead of the Sepoys, and the measurement of the Mustaches to a Military pattern, &c. as expressed in the Order, as the rumour now stands, and I may say accredited by Government and others, I do feel the greatest inquietude, that it is in the power of possibility, that infringements of the rights and prejudices of the Natives, *dear* to them as life, should originate with me, who, I will say, as much as any man in India, respect those immemorial usages. I therefore, my dear Sir, must call upon you, and Major Pierce, who compiled the Orders, to give every explanation on this particular point, whether any innovation has been introduced, or is it only a continuance of the long practice in the Army ?

“ As such I understood it from you, when the Orders to be published were read by me, in the presence of yourself, Major Pierce, and Colonel Orr, expressly that I might derive information from such lengthened experience as those Officers possessed upon local points ; and I recollect adverting to the Order in question, when I was assured that it was the established Military Custom ; and had I not sanctioned its common course, I must have conceived, I was induced by self-sentiment to overthrow the usual established Rule of a Sepoy Regiment.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK.”

THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL COLONEL AGNEW'S REPLY TO
SIR JOHN CRADOCK.

“Vellore, 18 July, 1806.

“ I NOW reply to the second part of your Excellency's enquiry ; and trust this statement will fully shew, that nothing was further from your Excellency's intentions than any interference with the Customs of Cast.

“ The total want in many of the Native Corps of any Standing Orders for the ordinary routine of Regimental Duty and interior Arrangement, and the glaring deficiencies in those which existed in other Corps, had been brought to public notice in the course of the inspection of Corps. The Deputy Adjutant-General, then employed by appointment of Government in revising the existing Code of Regulations, undertook to prepare a body of Standing Orders for a Battalion of Native Infantry, by which the whole Army should in future be guided ; and he referred to a former approved system of this kind while preparing that which was submitted to your Excellency for approval.”

The 10th paragraph of the XIth of these Orders is as follows :

“ It is ordered by the Regulations, that a Native Soldier shall *not* mark his face to denote his Cast, or wear Ear-rings, when dressed in his uniform ; and it is further directed, that at all Parades, and upon all Duties, every Soldier of the Battalion shall be clean shaved on the Chin. It is directed also, that Uniformity shall, as far as practicable, be preserved in regard to the Quantity and Shape of the Hair upon the upper Lip.”

“ This paragraph, when read by Major Pierce, I considered as the mere recital of what had been long practised in well-regulated Corps under the received Custom of the Service, although, like many other Customs, not especially directed by any formal Order, or always

“ rigidly enforced ; an opinion I joined in expressing when your Excellency stated your dislike
 “ to touch in any shape on the Custom of Cast, certainly not conceiving it to be a novel inno-
 “ vation, but what Custom, if not remote Regulations, had long established.

(Signed)

P. A. AGNEW.”

SIR JOHN CRADOCK TO MAJOR PIERCE, DEPUTY ADJUTANT-GENERAL
 TO THE ARMY.

“ July 24, 1806.

“ BUT I view the Clause to abolish the Distinction of Cast, &c. in the
 “ gravest light, and such, both as to sense and National Interest in India, as to call for unre-
 “ served proceeding, and to fix the error (if not to be done away) where it should lie.

“ You will recollect, that previous to the submission to Government of the Body of Stand-
 “ ing Orders, I employed many days in reading over all the Orders that you had taken the
 “ trouble to collect ; and which work was entrusted to you by Government, not only as the
 “ Deputy Adjutant-General, but an Officer of long military experience in this Country To
 “ prevent, as far as the most reflective precaution could reach, the possibility of local error in
 “ respect to the usage of the Indian Army, I summoned the Adjutant-General, the Quarter-
 “ Master-General ; and each paragraph was discussed. The one in question caused my notice,
 “ and I was assured it was not only unobjectionable, but the invariable course of every Regi-
 “ ment. As a stranger, and in the hands of the principal Staff Officers of the Honourable Com-
 “ pany's Army, could I oppose to their experience my single sentiment, and direct the over-
 “ throw of an established custom ?

“ It may appear that I have too much sensibility on the point, but that is impossible
 “ when the character of discretion and even common sense is at stake.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK.”

THE DEPUTY ADJUTANT-GENERAL MAJOR PIERCE TO
 SIR J. CRADOCK.

“ THIS compilation was principally formed upon Standing Orders estab-
 “ lished by the late Sir John Braithwaite, as Colonel of the 2d Battalion of European In-
 “ fantry, for that Corps, with the requisite deviations to render it applicable to Native Troops,
 “ and in reference to some of the most approved Regulations formerly in use in Native Bat-
 “ talions.

“ It was read aloud by your Excellency ; and when the 10th paragraph of the XIth
 “ Section particularly attracted your notice, and your Excellency asked whether it would in-
 “ terfere with the Prejudice of the Natives, I answered under the same impression that had
 “ induced me to insert it, as did the Adjutant-General to the same effect, that it would not,
 “ and that it was not the Custom in well-regulated Corps for Native Soldiers to appear in the
 “ manner forbid by the paragraph.

“ In inserting the above-mentioned paragraph I considered that I was merely recording
 “ what had always appeared to me to be a Regulation in the well-conducted part of the
 “ Service.

“ It was my good fortune to act for a series of years as public Staff-Officer of a station
 “ under an Officer (General Braithwaite) who, at the same time that he paid the most unre-
 “ mitted attention to the comfort and real prejudices of the Soldier, enforced Discipline
 “ throughout every Rank under his command in a degree that I have not seen since equalled ;
 “ and I declare upon my honour, that I do not recollect to have ever seen, during that period,

“ a Native Soldier on Duty with his Face marked, or with large Rings in his Ears ; and further,
 “ that I am certain, if any man had appeared so bedecked on any Parade, he would have been
 “ turned off from it. I was afterwards stationed as Major of Brigade at Vellore, where it never
 “ occurred, &c ”

“ The Regiments of Cavalry have in their ranks men of the highest Cast, of all Sects and
 “ Religions, &c. Reference can be made to the old Officers of those Corps for information,
 “ whether it has at any period been customary for their Soldiers to appear on Duty with Marks
 “ on their Faces, or with large Ear-rings.

“ The proof adduced with respect to the Turband, added to what I have had the honour
 “ to state in regard to the Prohibition of Marks, &c. will I hope enable your Excellency *to fix*
 “ *the error where it should lie*, and that it will be traced to that implacable hostile spirit
 “ against European dominion, that could transform a *Soldier's Turnscrow* into the *Holy Cross*,
 “ that could excite the Artificers at Wallajahabad to refuse to work after the arrival there of
 “ the news that Tippoo's sons were in possession of the Fort at Vellore, and that could occa-
 “ sion the sticking up of Placards in the Mosques about Madras, calling upon the People to
 “ rally in defence of the true Faith — a spirit which from report appears to have been parti-
 “ cularly instilled into the minds of the Native troops at Vellore

(Signed)

FRED. PIERCE,
 Dep. Adj.-Gen.”

The Commander in Chief cannot be surprized that the public mind should receive a strong impression upon these Orders, when he recollects his own emotion upon the perusal before mentioned ; but on examination it will be found, that such has been the silent common course of practice in almost every Battalion of the Service, that the Orders, in direct words, exist in many Orderly Books, and are understood to prevail, though not expressed in all. The Commander in Chief does not say universally, because there may be an exception, but he is not aware of the instance. It is the Stranger's ear which receives alarm on the subject, the Officer of long standing and years' experience in the Country, knows the real case, and views it with indifference.

Vide Orders
 11 Jan 1805,
 1st Battalion
 1st Regiment,
 Major-Gen.
 Campbell com-
 manding the
 Army.

Is it possible that an Officer of the long experience of Colonel Agnew, the Adjutant-General, inferior to no Officer on any Staff, and superior to most in ability and intelligence, could propose such an Order, were it contrary to the Usage of the Service, or an Innovation?

The Commander in Chief abstains from present remark on the Policy, or inquiry of the Principle ; but Justice to Individuals, as well as the cause of Truth, demands the statement.

The following Extracts of Letters will assure its foundation .

FROM MAJOR-GENERAL DUGALD CAMPBELL.

“ Bellary, Sept. 13, 1806.

“ SINCE the General Orders issued about eight years ago the Marks of Cast
 “ have been generally discontinued throughout the Army ; and I am confidently assured that
 “ many instances have occurred of Native Officers of their own accord chastising Sepoys for
 “ appearing in the Ranks so distinguished.”

FROM LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CHALMERS,
1st Battalion, 2d Regiment.

" August 28, 1806.

" SIR,

" I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 26th instant, in reply to which I beg leave to inform your Excellency, that so far back as the year 1777, Colonel Edington, one of the best Officers in the Service, to whose Battalion, the 4th, I then belonged, prohibited the wearing of Ear-rings when on Duty, or Marks of Cast. It was complied with without a word being said, as it was no degradation to them in regard to the Cast, they having it in their option to wear both Ear-rings and Marks the moment they were off Parade. The large Ear-rings are not a necessary Mark of Cast. The Ears being bored is quite sufficient, nor is it a crime in a Hindoo being without a Mark for any number of days. The leaving off the large Ear-rings and Marks was such an improvement to the Native Soldier's appearance, that a well-regulated Corps never allowed either.

" I have served in seven different Corps, and was Adjutant to two, and I declare that I never saw either large Ear-rings, or conspicuous Marks of Cast, on a Sepoy, when on Duty, since the period above mentioned; nor is it at this moment adopted in the Corps I command. Those Officers with whom I have had any conversation on the above subject, are of my opinion, that the Order respecting the Wearing of the Ear-rings, or Marks of Cast on the Forehead, does not militate against the highest Cast of the Native Soldiers. It has been the practice so generally, for these 29 years back, that an Order had never been thought necessary to be published on the subject.

(Signed)

J H. CHALMERS."

MAJOR BRUCE, 20th Reg.

" Madras, Sept. 4, 1806.

" SIR,

" I HAVE had the honour to receive your letter of yesterday, and have to inform your Excellency, that I have always considered it a Standing Regulation of the Native Service (and, to the best of my recollection, it was invariably practised in the different Battalions I served in since the year 1783), namely, that when Sepoys were paraded for general or regimental Duty, they always appeared clean shaved on the chin, without the Marks of Cast on the Forehead, or Ear-rings.

" At Exercise of a Morning, and at Evening Parade, I have not unfrequently seen Sepoys permitted to fall in, with the different Marks to denote their Cast, on the supposition that they had in the course of the day attended some Religious Ceremony; but I have ever had the idea that in the majority of Native Corps the indulgence was not permitted.

(Signed)

D. BRUCE."

The terms "*Innovations, obnoxious Orders*," have still further extent: they may reach the entire Dress of the Sepoy, for the whole is alteration or innovation. Twenty years ago the Sepoy was not better dressed or equipped than the present Lascar at this day. The Native Soldier, except in a Turband (which in nothing resembles a real Turband, and, as any other the production of fancy, may be called a hat, with equal aptitude, as the objected one),

and the black complexion, which cannot be altered, is scarcely to be distinguished from the European. It is the prevailing wish in the Coast Army to assimilate the appearance in every thing practicable, and each successive Corps raised goes beyond the former, in further similitude, and the last formed, the Madras Fencibles, are distinguished by Feathers and Pantaloon. In this ardour of introduction the Commander in Chief found this Army, and *nothing has he added to it.* He is as anxious as any person for the fair Inquiry, if the practice is judicious? if in improved Appearance, or supposed foundations of Discipline, the affections of the Army may not have suffered injury, and while gaining a shadow we may not have weakened a real substance?

The Commander in Chief can easily account for the feelings of the Officer's mind in India upon the inconvenience of Casts, and the anxiety to discard their appearance under arms. While they prevail, Military rank and subordination almost cease. The Private of high Cast will not permit his Officer of inferior to sit down before him. In the Coast Army all Orders and Casts are admitted, and the Pariah or Chuckler stands in the ranks close to the Syed or Rajahpoot.

The functions of duty are also impeded, and the Native Soldier though under arms, if Casts have all their force, must refuse numerous Orders. It is said that the Mahrattas (Hindoos too) are the best Native Soldiers in India, because in the field they are prevailed upon to abandon the more injurious effects of Casts.

Major Smith's Book, an Officer in the Mahratta Service.

The event at Vellore may now stand examination, and the question fairly resolved, whether the insurrection of the two Native Corps that composed the Garrison arose from a mind alienated from the Service by the introduction of a Turband, and other Orders termed "*obnoxious*," or whether the act, with all its attendant horrors, was not the fruit of deep-laid artifice, perhaps of foreign as well as domestic growth, to destroy the British power, and raise up that Moorish government which, in hereditary hatred, pursued the overthrow of the English dominion and existence.

To appreciate fairly the case, it is necessary to examine all the evidence that has been collected from different quarters. What has been produced goes far beyond the information admitted by the Commission at Vellore, and, when considered, must establish stronger and different conclusions than result from their defective Report. If the testimony has wanted the formality of an oath, every man who knows India will disregard that point; for the oath in no view is to be depended upon, but truth is alone to be sought through variety of evidence and circumstance, and the exercise of sagacity and judgment. The nature and extent of the oath of the Conspirators, with the most important facts that have come to knowledge, and "*admitted*" as the best foundations to rest the truth upon, will be found in the chief Conspirator's (Shaik Cossini) evidence, not received by the Commission.

It will be admitted that opposition to the Turband first appeared at Vellore, that at no other Station of the Army where it was preparing was any dissatisfaction or any discontent to be observed. To this hour, throughout the extended quarter of India, the Southern Division, the Northern, the Ceded Districts, and Mysore, no discontent has been discovered, and many Regiments, since the Report, have petitioned to wear this Turband. Wherever agitation has shewn itself, it was among the few Corps who had connection with Vellore, from late residence, or it was in a situation (at Hyderabad) where the same spirit, though under different agency, was calculated to produce similar effect.

It was necessary to remove the mutinous Battalion (the 2d of the 4th) from Vellore; and another from the South was marched to its relief. This Corps (the 2d of the 23d) fatally composed of Poligars, and the relations of those who had fallen by the Sword, or Civil Power, in late contests in these Provinces, were the chief perpetrators of the bloody acts that ensued; and proved that Vellore early matured their hostile sentiments.

It is in Evidence from Lieut-Col Forbes, commanding the 1st Battalion of the 1st Regiment, the other Corps in Garrison, that for a length of time the Descendants of Tippoo's Family had incessantly laboured to instil into the minds of the Sepoys, that every part of their Dress was objectionable, and that many articles were direct attempts to introduce Christianity.

Vide Examination before the Commission.

No circumstance escaped their remarks the Turncrew at the Soldier's breast was converted into the Cross.

More decided means had been adopted to secure the minds of the Native Commissioned Officers, and thus all chance was removed to enlighten the ignorant Sepoys, or avert the evil effect of their destructive machinations.

Colonel Mont-
tressor's and
Captain's de-
bani's Commu-
nications from
Hyderabad

At this period, when "*so much is known*" upon the painful subject of the Native Officers, the truth of their total disaffection and disloyalty in the two Corps that composed the Garrison at Vellore cannot be doubted. It may be traced from the earliest period connected with the event, and their active obstinacy in assertion, that the Turband was free from objection, or created no dissatisfaction, was in the truest spirit of Conspiracy, and its only object the due event they had long meditated.

Vide Commu-
nication from
Hyderabad

No common pains can have produced such a change in the minds of persons bred and elevated to distinction in the Service, and the enlightened and patriotic inquirer will *not* rest satisfied with indolent answer, that it was a Turband against which not one was found to express disapprobation, or Orders that had existed for years in effect, that could in so short a period drive men to the complicated charge of guilt and treachery in which they now stand.

Court of In-
quiry, 14 May
1806

They were the Native Officers of the two Battalions of the 1st Regiment that met on the Glacis of Vellore, and determined on the opposition to the Turband, before they had seen it, and it was a Subidar of the 4th Regiment to the latest moment declared the Corps free from discontent on the subject of the Turband, and thus kept their Officers without information.

Lieut.-Col
Folles's Evi-
dence

Evidence of
Jusmaul
O'Deen, Foster
Brother of
Prince Moos u
deen

Military Court
of Inquiry.

It appears unnecessary to detail the extensive evidence, that the Family of Tippoo took an open and active part in the fatal scene; that the most confidential persons in the Palace had been employed in negotiation and direct hostility. The guilt of two Sons is established, and their murderous intentions left without a doubt. The plot had nearly succeeded to its full extent, and it appears, in a species of wild Asiatic arrangement, that only the body of Lieutenant-Colonel Marriott, the Paymaster to the Family, who in unaccountable mystery was to be suffered to exist the last European, was wanting to be produced, to issue from the Palace and display his person.

The concealment of all this Plot may be deemed wonderful. An Oath was administered to hundreds. The terms were singular in their nature. *Secrecy*, "a determination not to wear the Turband," and to destroy all Europeans, and re-establish the Mussulman Government. The first and last articles are perfectly understood in fatal connection, but the introduction of the other only proves the wicked ingenuity of the Projectors, for while Secrecy prevailed, and objection to the Turband lay dormant, how could its adoption be countermanded.

Shack Cos-
sim's Deposi-
tion

Military Court
of Inquiry.

It will scarcely be credited at a future time, that but one person, the faithful Sepoy Mustapha Bey, whom the Native Officers represented to the Commanding Officer as insane, should be found to give information; and that none of the Authorities that ruled over Vellore or its Pettah, "the Commandant, the Paymaster of Stipends, or the Collector" (for by late Regulations all had joint, where for security perhaps there should have been but one sway), had a single faithful adherent to watch the designs, or report the meetings, of the Conspirators. It is even stated in evidence, amid the numerous bands of the Family of Tippoo, collected from all parts of the country, and resident in the Pettah, there were 500 persons in regular pay. Thus the extraordinary liberality and munificence of the British Government, with indulgence to the same extent, became instruments towards their own destruction.

An agitation that arose at Wallajabad, subsequent to the Mutiny at Vellore, demands the next attention. Accounts of a very alarming, but still a general nature, were received from Lieut.-Col. Lang, who commanded a force of three Battalions assembled at that Station for exercise. The Commander in Chief thought it necessary to repair to that quarter, that the promptest measures might be effected, or the requisite investigation pursued.

It would only increase unnecessarily the length of the account to describe the detail of transaction or enquiry that took place. It appears to the Commander in Chief that real causes of alarm had never existed; that under the unfavourable impression that prevailed, apprehension was very natural; but that representations had been much exaggerated, and that casual expressions from individuals of the Corps of a seditious tendency, or suspicious import, might have been overheard, but could not be substantiated by any proof.

Justice, and the spirit of conciliation and confidence, required that some irregular proceedings in one of the Battalions should be passed over; and beyond the separation of the Corps, it did not seem necessary, or indeed practicable, to extend punishment. The occurrence at Wallajabad is no farther remarkable than that the three Corps that composed the force had secret connection at Vellore; and the other two, the 1st Battalion of the 23d and the 2d of the 1st Regiments, were Battalions of the same Regiments that formed the late unhappy Garrison. It cannot be omitted, that upon the investigations which were pursued at Wallajabad, the same indifference, inaction, and the same silence prevailed on the part of the Native Officers, and that if no information could be obtained, it arose from their apparent and decided resolution to withhold all intelligence.

Proceedings
before Go-
vernment.

Information was given here by an old Subidar of Cavalry, that disaffection had crept into the Cavalry, and he named some Regiments as liable to great suspicion. Those that had been quartered at Arcot, and near the scene of general seduction at Vellore, were chiefly mentioned. Such communication appeared to the Commander in Chief of the highest interest, and he laid the account before Government in a Minute (to which he begs to refer), in a secret manner so delicate a concern demanded. An extraordinary embarrassment attended the Evidence at the time this Subidar Secundar Khan, a man of most respectable appearance and pretension, gave the intelligence. Information was transmitted from Colonel Montresor at Hyderabad, that he was a man of the most dangerous character and known disloyalty, and that all his actions should be watched. His information respecting the Cavalry has by no means been confirmed; but still there were alarming points in his intelligence that are known to be truth, and correspond entirely with the confession of the chief Conspirator at Vellore, Shaick Cossim. It is possible that the man, conscious of his guilt, and even apprehending the information against his own character, became informer to screen himself. Since that period he has become reserved and silent, and seems to wish to weaken his own intelligence.

Vide Exam-
ination before
Lieut.-Col.
Munro.

2d August.

Whatever related to the Cavalry, or the general name of Moorman, from the earliest moment, gave the Commander in Chief the greatest inquietude; for, while it was the common conversation that it was a Moorish Plot to restore the Mussulman Government, it could not escape reflection that the Regiments of Cavalry are nearly all of that description; and the apprehension of imprudence on this point became so strong, that the Commander in Chief privately addressed the General and Commanding Officers, to suppress, as much as possible, such dangerous language.

Letter to Ge-
neral Officers,
Vellore, July
19, 1800

Uneasy sensations were experienced at the Presidency, and suspicions entertained upon the conduct and dispositions of the Corps that formed the Garrison of Fort St. George. The Commander in Chief cannot determine whether the apprehensions, which proceeded to great extent, were founded or otherwise, as he was absent; but if just, they must be imputed to the poison of Vellore, for the Battalions had been stationed in that quarter within the last six months, and without doubt exposed to all the artifices of that place. Except *Vellore, Wallajabad*, and the Presidency, universal good order and satisfaction prevailed throughout the whole of the Territory of Fort St. George, in the Army; and the Turband, and "obnoxious Orders," never were mentioned.

The remaining instance is the imputed design of the Subsidiary Force, at Hyderabad, in Foreign Dominion, to have acted the same dreadful scene as took place at Vellore.

To the latest period the Commander in Chief received the most favourable reports from Colonel Montresor, the Commanding Officer, of the discipline, the subordination, and the harmony, that prevailed. Nothing led to the most distant suspicion that any dissatisfaction

existed. At once, as subsequent reports confirm, the most mutinous spirit broke forth; and accident, or judicious measures, seem to have averted the calamity of Vellore. Proof may yet be wanting to establish the connection that subsisted; but coincidences are too strong in dates and circumstances, in every fair reasoning upon the subject, to admit the doubt, but that similar artifices had been practised, and though the exact object might be different from Vellore, yet the general end was the same, to overturn the British, and restore the Mussulman Government. Details of circumstances are not required. they must be pursued through all the documents, that again run over all the case of Turband, Orders, &c.; but at Hyderabad, as at Vellore, the same machinations appear, the same inflammations, the same attempts (the ground-work of all delusion) to persuade that Christianity was at hand, and the Sepoys to be made the first Converts. The extraordinary appearance of the Chief Sirdars from the City every where in the Camp, unusual intercourse of the most dangerous characters with the Battalions attempted, all prove that some general object was in agitation; and at this moment the extent of design or danger, then frustrated, is not known, but still requires the most active and cautious investigation.

Colonel Montresor's and Captain Sydenham's Correspondence.

Col Montresor's Letter, 12 Sept. 1806.

At Hyderabad, the painful point of the Native Officers comes forward in a shape, and with a force, that truly demands the most interesting attention. The Commanding Officer, Colonel Montresor, has invariably stated his opinion, that the alarms and agitations that have so recently distracted the Subsidiary Force, have been instigated by these persons; and though he failed to obtain required proofs, in conjunction with the opinion of the Resident, he had been obliged to send away to Masulipatam, in confinement, three Native Officers, of whose complicated guilt no doubt existed, and that their influence and disloyalty was so great, that their immediate removal was necessary to the security and tranquillity of the Force.

Sept 20, 1806.

The Commander in Chief has lately laid before Government a Letter transmitted to him by Colonel Montresor (the authenticity of which he does not seem to doubt) from the principal of these Native Officers, addressed to the Nizam, which, if true, communicates disaffection, and the most sanguinary design on the part of the Native Officers of that Force, to an extent most alarming, and carries with it other reflections that excite apprehension in a different quarter.

In several Minutes the Commander in Chief has expressed his persuasion that in the late Commotion the object of our Enemies has been to corrupt the Native Officers; and by securing their co-operation they well knew that the ignorant multitude would be deluded into any belief.

It remains yet to be discovered what have been the exact sources of the general misrepresentation that is abroad, whether they are of domestic or foreign origin, or perhaps an united effort; but a revival of the Mussulman power seems to be the object, and with this in view, it has been a wise but fatal policy, to seduce the Native Officers, the great majority of whom it has long been the practice of this Army to select from that Faith, and their seduction on that account the easier to be accomplished.

Since the event at Vellore the subject of the punishment of the guilty persons has often come under consideration; and the Commander in Chief has recorded his sentiments in several Minutes, to which he requests attention.

It will be found that his first object was to discover and protect innocence, but that he never lost sight of the necessary vindication of crimes, that equally outraged humanity, and violated every principle of fidelity and discipline. Such is the undistinguished mass of guilt, that were an amnesty to take effect, it will bring back into the ranks wretches covered with blood, who must look those surviving Officers in the face they attempted but could not destroy.

Lieut.-Col. Forbes's Report.

Letter from the Deputy Judge Advocate to Col. Harecourt, Sept. 1806.

Innocency has not been discoverable except in a few solitary instances; the Prisoners are chiefly those who only ceased their murder and plunder at the moment of flight, and the Native General Court-Martial now engaged upon the Trials are the most forward to express their sense of the general guilt, and to press for banishment. Such was the general senti-

ment at first, and from the hour the intention was altered, difficulty has increased upon every deliberation.

To the proposed confinement the Commander in Chief dissents, in the most solemn manner even impunity, with all its risk, is preferable. While it continues, martial malevolence will never cease; the European and the Sepoy never can be Friends it will supply a perpetual theme of fatal convulsion, and Termination and Oblivion, terms so highly prized and in the front of all proceedings, can never have existence.

The Commander in Chief has now detailed, with as much brevity as the case would permit, the several circumstances that constitute the object of the present Dispatch to England. It appears to arise out of the subject, that some general opinions should be annexed upon the state of the Country, that our Rulers at home may know how far real improvement has taken place, and whether the order of things in this part of India is amended by the variety of late Regulations.

As a stranger, the Commander in Chief cannot feel himself competent to deliver opinions from himself, but in his zeal for the public advantage he may be permitted to state the prevailing sentiments of others, the most moderate and most experienced in the society of this Presidency.

The general belief is, (it may not yet have reached the Government,) that the condition of the People *is not* so happy as it was—that their own arrangements, their own institutions, pleased them better than our Regulations. It is reasoned with apparent force, that, slaves as they are to their own customs and habits, in every tittle of their lives, the introduction of all our systems (which it is in vain to make them comprehend) alarms and annoys them, and they view them only as preparatory to greater innovations, which may extend to every circumstance that surrounds them. It is said, while the treasures of the State are expended on Judicial Establishments throughout Countries without distinction, where even Military Force, at times, is unable to preserve subjection, it would be better to enquire into the state of the inhabitants, and regulate the means of subsistence, that the numerous dependants on former power and antient establishments, the crowds of Mooimen in the different Provinces unemployed, may not remain in distress, and continue to excite discontent.

The inhabitants of this Country do not comprehend the convulsion at present before their eyes. Within their shortest remembrance Military establishment and controul attracted all their attention, they understood and felt its origin, as congenial to their own notions of authority; at present they view a different order of things, and in the place of the old and experienced Officer to whom they have long looked up with respect, they see his power and ascendancy passed away, and the youthful inexperienced Judge or Boyish Collector supply all and more than his former place. In England such institutions are right, are suited to the civilization and felicity of that incomparable Land, but in India, where nothing is alike, it seems visionary to order all things to be the same, and it is feared will only prove the goodness of the intention.

The people of India must be left to find happiness in their own way, and our attention directed to the security of our own singular situation, and the general advantage of the State.

In the range of desired improvement, Philanthropy and Religion cannot fail to make a person wish to see Christianity extended, but what danger will not follow from this ardour? Apprehension of the design universally prevails, however difficult to account for it, and if the pursuit be continued, or the suspicion suffered to gain further ground, our existence in the Country is at stake.

A Paper of this nature cannot well close without some general remark on the situation of the Army on this Establishment. In the Minutes the Commander in Chief has occasionally laid before the Government in different shapes, he has given opinions on defects that appeared, and proposed measures of improvement. Before his departure it will be his duty to enlarge upon the subject to the utmost of his ability.

30th Nov 1805
2d Jan. 1806.

Vide Commander in Chief's Letter to the Adjutant-General, June 16, 1806.

"I cannot close this subject without giving vent to an opinion I have long formed, that it is the prevailing practice of this Service to withhold that respect and intercourse from the Native Commissioned Officers, to which their situation and common opinion, as attached to the appellation of Officer, entitles them, and thus outcast from confidence, or even friendly communication, it will in vain be expected that at moments of difficulty or pressure these men will proffer that rapid and energetic assistance which affection, or identity of feeling and interest, will alone inspire. I am so impressed with this sentiment from concurring proofs every day, that I shall lose no time in communicating it to the head of the Army, in the manner most likely to alter the present system, and produce an opposite effect of the highest importance to the Service

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK."

What seems to require immediate attention is the Augmentation of the number of European Officers to the Native Corps, to establish by the more powerful incentive than the doubtful effect of a common Order, a better communication and more intercourse between the European Officer and the Native Soldier, to promote the attainment of the Native Languages by every encouragement and reward, and to consider well the situation of the Native Officer in our Service, whether, placed as he is, certainly not in his own Corps in the enjoyment of that respect and confidence due to the appellation or rank of Officer (and without hope of further elevation or emolument), his mind may not naturally become discontented, try to secure an un-

duc influence over the Sepoys, and rest his thoughts on other subjects than fidelity, or the advantage of our cause.

These considerations, or rather their execution, may require time : but the Augmentation of the Establishment of Officers (in effect not one-third of his Majesty's Service) and the full supply of Vacancies (for there has not been an Ensign for some years) can be no question, and press for immediate adoption.

The last and most important point, the loss of Regimental Officers of rank and experience called away from their Corps to fill the numerous Staff situations, and other employments. Every Officer of talent or consideration bends his mind to this attainment, and generally succeeds. His place cannot be supplied either in ability or real efficiency (for he cannot be placed on Half-pay, as would be the case in his Majesty's Service), and the Regiment and all the conduct of it must suffer in proportion.

(Signed)

September 21, 1806.

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieut.-General.

(p)

IN SECRET CONSULTATION, 28th Feb. 1807.

The President records the following Minute.

I RETURN with feelings of extreme reluctance to the discussion which has arisen out of the Vellore Mutiny. The statement however of the Commander in Chief, recorded on the 25th of October, has accidentally remained unanswered. That Paper contains many matters of fact, and many more of opinion, which cannot receive my assent. The greater part of these have in our subsequent Proceedings been fully discussed, or refuted by the test of experience, and by the better information which time has given of the actual circumstances and causes of the disaffection of the Native Troops.

I should have been well satisfied if this Paper had never appeared upon the Records. It was written by the Commander in Chief, before the departure of the October Dispatch, in justification of his own conduct, and was sent to our Superiors at home, and circulated here, for the purpose of removing impressions which had gone abroad, attributing to the Military Departments the cause of the Mutiny. The Commander in Chief very candidly offered to my perusal this document, intended to be a Defence of himself, which, in its course, reflected upon the conduct of the Government, and had the effect of transferring to Council, in the opinion of its readers, a portion of that responsibility, to which I do not consider ourselves liable. Finding, however, that this Statement was not intended for the Records, I declined

the perusal of it, until the Public Dispatch was finished. The case, as far as regarded my situation with those by whom alone I was to be officially judged, depended upon the Records. I was not to be judged by this separate non-official Statement. I could not reply to it in the form in which it was presented to me. I knew I could not agree to its contents, from the fundamental difference of opinion that existed between the Council and the Commander in Chief. I was satisfied with the correctness of my own conduct, and heartily harassed as I had been with the most unpleasant subject, I was happy in an excuse to avoid occasion of further division of sentiment.

When the Dispatch was finished, I read the Statement, and did not regret my not having sooner seen it.

The Commander in Chief recorded it at a later period, by way of a Minute, upon a Letter of the Supreme Government, containing Statements entirely at variance with the reasoning of the Commander in Chief. Through the interference of one of the Members of Council, I had hoped that the Commander in Chief would have been induced to have withdrawn the Statement, as not at that time called for or necessary, and which, if permitted to stand, would involve the Board in further dissension. It was impossible for me to pass unnoticed certain parts of the Statement. I could not do so, either in justice to myself, or consistently with my duty, which forbids me from allowing the Court of Directors to be either alarmed or misled by opinions which I may consider erroneous. As long as these sentiments did not appear upon the Records, I was not obliged to suppose them known to the Court, nor in any way responsible for the impression made by them. I had understood that this Paper would have been withdrawn. I remained in that belief until I perceived, in the Draft of the Dispatch transmitted to England, on the 12th of last Month, reference made to this Paper as being on the Record. I had then only time to enter on the Dispatch itself, an hasty Protest to the most important opinions which I recollected. I have considered it necessary to say so much, in order to explain the cause of my return, at this late period, to this unfortunate subject.

It is my intention to confine my observations to Two points only in the Statement.

First; To that part of the Narrative which relates to the communication between the Commander in Chief and Government, when Sir John Cradock, from Nundydroog, submitted the question of revoking the Order of establishing the Turband.

Secondly. To some general opinions, stated to be "the prevailing sentiments of others," the most moderate and most experienced in the Society of this Presidency," upon this most important question; viz. "Whether the order of things in this part of India is amended by "the variety of late Regulations"

I shall note in the margin the particular Extracts from the Commander in Chief's Minute, upon which I have to remark.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S MINUTE.

"No farther intelligence of the dissatisfaction reached the Commander in Chief at Nundydroog till the latter end of June, when he received a very impressive representation from an experienced and able Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Brunton, that the Turband had occasioned great discontent in the Army, and earnestly recommended a repeal of the Order.

"The Commander in Chief at once adopted the resolution of confining his embarrassment to the Government, and submitted the following secret reference to the Right Honourable the Governor in Council.

The inference that is apparently offered to the reader is this: The Commander in Chief perceived the danger, if his warning had been taken, the Turband would have been recalled. Government are answerable for the consequences which may have arisen from its continuance.

I must beg leave to retrace very shortly the source of such transactions as relate to the Turband. It is material to state, that the first alteration of the Turband took place without any communication with the Government. It will be recollected that the first appearance of dissatisfaction was manifested at Vellore by the 2d of the 4th, in a manner little short of mutiny. That it was deemed necessary to suppress these acts of insubordination by the most decided conduct. The principal Mutineers were in consequence sent down under an escort of Cavalry to the Presidency, to

Commander in Chief's Minute

“(Secret.)

“*Nundydroog, June 29, 1806.*

“MY LORD,

“I MUST have recourse to your Lordship's judgment and that of the Council to relieve me from great anxiety and embarrassment upon the subject of the Turbands, the full particulars of which case are so well known to your Lordship, and upon the proceedings, from my absence, I have already requested your Lordship's direction.

“The construction of the Turband originated from the advice and under the superintendence of Colonel Agnew the Adjutant-General, and Major Pierce the Deputy Adjutant-General; and as an alteration from the former one appeared wanting, I thought I could not confide so simple a matter to better hands, or Officers of more local experience

“I have the strongest reasons to suppose that almost universal objection arises against the Turband, and though force and punishment may overcome individual opposition, yet the firm dislike does not abate, and the frequent recurrence of severity may produce, though it may be remote, bad consequences.

“I am as aware as the human mind can possess the sentiment, that opposition to military and just authority cannot be yielded to, and that the attempt must be crushed in its earliest stage.

“This is the sole reasoning towards a British soldier, and were it purely a British case, I should neither feel embarrassment, or should I thus trouble your Lordship in Council.

“But upon the prejudices of India, the force of Cast, which in its various shape no European may perfectly comprehend, it is allowable even in a Soldier's mind to pause, and solicit the advice of the Head, and his companions in the Government.

“The question is not confined to the judgment of the ignorant Soldiery, it is the subject of conversation among

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take their trial before a Native General Court Martial. They were tried, and sentenced to receive corporal punishment. Of several Prisoners who were found guilty, the greater part having shewn signs of contrition were pardoned; and two only, whose conduct was particularly insolent, were punished. I cannot convey a more just impression of the necessity entertained by the Commander in Chief of supporting with the most decisive language and measures his authority, than by the following Order, which was published under Sir John Cradock's authority at Vellore.

—
“TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FANCOURT,
Commanding Vellore.

“*Fort St. George,
7 May 1806.*

“SIR,

“I have received by Express of yesterday's date your Letter, and have submitted it to the Commander in Chief.

“Whilst the Commander in Chief regrets the cause which requires such measures, he feels it to be his duty to check, by the most decided resolutions, the symptoms of insubordination which you have reported in the 2d Battalion of the 4th Regiment of Native Infantry.

“His Excellency has therefore ordered to Vellore a detachment of His Majesty's 19th Light Dragoons, who will receive and escort to the Presidency the nineteen men confined by Lieutenant-Colonel Dailey for trial before the General Court Martial now setting, against whom he will prefer charges, and prepare to support the same by requisite evidence.

“You will also direct the Non-commissioned Officers of the Grenadier Company (the two who did not refuse the Turband in the first instance excepted) to be reduced to the Ranks the Commander in Chief deeming a man who hesitates a moment to obey an Order, unfit to bear the character of a Non-commissioned Officer.

“You will further, through Lieutenant-Colonel Darley, direct the Native Commissioned Officers of the 2d Battalion of the 4th Regiment of Native Infantry immediately to make up and wear Turbands of the prescribed pattern. Disobedience or hesitation on their part will be instantly followed by dismissal from the Service in Public Orders on your Report.

“Lieutenant-Colonel Kennedy has orders (should you require it) to march the 19th Dragoons to Vellore to assist in enforcing obedience.

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the best-informed Officers, and my intelligence from Seringapatam, where there is a numerous Garrison, is, 'that it is the common cry that the next attempt will be to make the Sepoys Christians'

"I lay before your Lordship, in confidence, a private Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Brunton, and the same sentiment prevails with many other moderate and discreet Officers.

"Still it is my wish, and the best judgment I can apply to this untoward subject, to persevere, and conquer prejudice, as perhaps the least evil; but when consequences may ensue of a disadvantageous nature, and even the source of our Recruiting at stake, so difficult at all times with due selection and effect, I am not satisfied in my own mind to persevere to the full extent, without recurrence to your Lordship's advice, and the sanction of Government.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieut-Gen."

"The Commander in Chief thus endeavoured to unite military principles with the strictest caution, and was prepared to follow such steps as the best information and the sanction of the highest Authority should dictate.

"The Government honoured him with an Answer, and proposed the issue of an Order to the Army.

"The determination was expressed to enforce the Turbans, as the opposition arose from ignorant clamour, unfounded on any principle, but at the same time to respect the usages and customs of the Native Troops on all occasions.

"Both appeared to the Commander in Chief highly proper, and calculated to produce the best remedy in a case of extreme embarrassment. The Order was not issued, as Government, with whom the decision remained, on account of the Commander in Chief's absence from Madras, did not think it necessary."

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"It is the intention of the Commander in Chief immediately to relieve the 2d Battalion of the 4th Regiment of Native Infantry, but though he thinks proper to remove that Corps from Vellore, he will not admit of hesitation to the Orders he has given.

(Signed)

P. A. AGNEW,
Adj. Gen. of the Army."

It will be perceived that Military Command never was expressed in higher or more imperious language. From resolutions so strongly marked it would be impossible to recede without hazarding the very foundations of Military Discipline. It was with such sentiments that I received the reference of the Commander in Chief

The conduct of Government in their decision upon this reference is placed upon the most delicate grounds of responsibility, for I am prepared to state my opinion that if the Orders had been then revoked, the Mutiny and Massacre at Vellore would not have happened. I do not wish to shrink from the question

It will, I think, be admitted by all Military men, that after the very high tone in which the first opposition to the Turband had been suppressed by the authority of the Commander in Chief, we could not retract without committing the Discipline of the Army. and that under this opinion, no consideration but the positive information of general dissatisfaction, and the consequent apprehension of effects more dangerous than the relaxation of discipline, would authorize a departure from a command so positive. This question will turn upon the point whether we were in possession of that evidence which did not admit of doubt as to the matter of fact, *viz.* of general dissatisfaction.

It seems that the reference of the Commander in Chief was founded upon a communication from Lieutenant-Colonel Brunton, and upon one to the same purport from Seringapatam. The name of the Officer from whom the latter information was received did not appear in the Commander in Chief's Letter. With regard to the opinion of Lieutenant-Colonel Brunton, it could have no weight with us, from the state of health in which he had been for a length of time upon leaving the Presidency on the 17th of the same month, his life was despaired of, and his mind and nerves were suffering under the most melancholy despondency. It was natural to conclude that the knowledge of the fact might not have been known to the Commander in Chief. At any rate, however, Lieutenant-Colonel Brunton had been all his life-time at the Presidency in a Civil Department, and could have no direct knowledge of the feelings of the Sepoys upon this subject.

Commander in Chief's Minute.

"The following are the most material Extracts from the Correspondence :

"*Public Letter to the Commander in Chief.*

"July 4, 1806.

"(Secret Department)

"If there had been reason to suppose that the late change of Dress was liable to the objection of militating against the Religious Principles of the inhabitants of this Country, we should have no hesitation in immediately recommending to your Excellency the relinquishment of the intention to establish the proposed change; but as it appears from the evidence taken in the late Enquiry at Vellore, that no objection of this nature exists, we certainly deem it advisable that the alternative of yielding to the clamour arising from an unfounded prejudice, should, if possible, be avoided.

(Signed) "W. BENTINCK,
and Council."

—
"*General Order by Government,*
July 4th, 1806.

"THE Right Honourable the Governor in Council having been informed by his Excellency the Commander in Chief of the opposition which has, in some instances, been experienced in establishing an alteration which it was deemed expedient to adopt in the form of the Turband in use among the Native Corps of this Establishment, his Lordship in Council is led to express his extreme regret, that any part of the Native Army, whose merits have been so frequently extolled and rewarded by this Government, could have suffered itself to be deluded by an unfounded clamour.

"It will be in every instance the wish of the Right Honourable the Governor in Council, to evince a sacred regard for the Religious Principles of the Native Troops, as well as of all other inhabitants of this Country; but in the present case it ap-

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The other authority was not known to us, but it was reasonable to suppose that it was not the Commanding Officer of Mysore*, whose opinion would have been considered official, and entitled to attention. The Adjutant-General at the Presidency had received no intimation of dissatisfaction elsewhere. The Turband was worn by one of the Corps at Fort St. George without any expressions of discontent coming to my knowledge.

It was therefore the opinion of Council, that cause did not appear for the revocation of the Orders, but we did not think it right to neglect the satisfaction of the feelings, howsoever groundless, which had been made known to us.

We determined in consequence to issue an Order which, while it supported Military Discipline, and expressed the determination not to give way to clamour, recalled to the recollection of the Sepoys the respect which had been always paid to their religious prejudices, and repeated the same assurances.

This Order was transmitted to the Commander in Chief on the 4th July, and would reach him on the 6th. The Commander in Chief, in his answer dated the 9th July (the day before the Mutiny) observed, "I take the liberty to express my entire concurrence with the spirit and terms of the Order, as every way calculated to restore just authority, and to allay any prejudices that may exist upon the imputed disregard to the rights attached to Cast or ancient Custom."

The same regret will be entertained that the Commander in Chief did not publish this Order which he considered fit for its purpose, as that the Governor in Council did not advise the revocation of the Orders upon the Commander in Chief's reference: but in fact a subsequent passage from the same Letter exculpates both the Commander in Chief and the Government.

"Since I last had the honour to address your Lordship in Council, I have heard nothing more, which silence leads me to hope that the disinclination to the Turband has become more feeble, or perhaps that reports have been exaggerated. Under this view it may be judicious to postpone the publication of the Order, either to let the subject fall to the ground, as no longer the interposition of Government is required, or to re-assume the issue, as your Lordship in Council may determine by future events."

* On the 20th July, ten days after the Mutiny, Sir J. Cradock laid before Council a Letter from General Macdowall, commanding in Mysore, stating the perfect tranquillity of the Troops at Serungapatam, and expressing his belief that the disaffection at Vellore was merely partial and local.

pears, after the strictest enquiry, and according to the testimony of Natives of the highest Cast, that the opposition which has been experienced in the late change of Turbans is destitute of any foundation in either the Law or usage of the Mahomedan or Hindoo Religions; and any persons who may persevere in that opposition cannot, in consequence, fail to be subjected to the severest penalties of military discipline."

—
“(Secret)

“*Nundydroog, July 9, 1806.*

“MY LORD,

“I HAVE been much honoured this morning by the receipt of the Letter from your Lordship in Council, upon the subject of the Turbans, and feel myself peculiarly gratified by the transmission of the proposed Order by Government previous to its circulation.

“I take the liberty to express my entire concurrence with the spirit and terms of the Order, as every way calculated to preserve just authority, and to allay any prejudices that may exist upon the imputed disregard to the rights attached to Cast, or ancient Custom. The point was of infinite embarrassment, and if any act was to be resorted to beyond the immediate and constant vindication of violated discipline, as it might arise, I conceive that an Order from Government of this nature would seem to promise the best effect.

“I will confess, that by the present communication with Government, I have gained the object I had in view, which was, to receive from them an unreserved opinion as to the propriety of full coercion, should it prove necessary, but which, situated as this Country is, buried in the absurdities of Cast or prejudice, dear to them as existence, I was fearful to take a step of any doubt, without explicit knowledge and the sanction of Government.

“Since I last had the honour to

In this paragraph the Commander in Chief fairly states, that his doubt of the state of the Sepoy mind were much shaken, and is of opinion that even a measure attended with none of those objections to which the question he suggested to us was liable, was not at that moment necessary.

I certainly regret that the Order was not published, because it could not have added to, and might have prevented, the Mutiny. The Commander in Chief acted to the best of his judgment upon the information which he possessed, and cannot therefore be condemned. If the Chief Military Authority charged with the superintendence of the Army was ignorant of its sentiments, the Governor in Council, depending officially upon this source for information, may surely be excused for not taking measures which alone could have been justified by the most entire conviction of the truth of the facts upon which they were called to determine. If the Commander in Chief's first reference had not been embarrassed by his own preceding conduct, if it had been supported upon better authority, if the Commander in Chief had continued to enforce his reference by subsequent communications confirming the conviction of his mind as to the truth of his statement, if this reference had been confirmed from other quarters, the reflection that the Mutiny had grown out of our neglect of such apparently solid evidence, would weigh heavy on my mind. But the subsequent Letter of Sir John Cradock has entirely relieved us from this state of uncertainty. He in this acknowledges his own information to be so defective, and upon the whole so favourable, as not to warrant any act being founded upon it. Indeed if the information had been positive, the Commander in Chief would have at once revoked an Order which issued from his authority only, and with which the Governor in Council had been in no way concerned.

The Commander in Chief asked our advice, Whether he should revoke it or not? We told him in answer, That we thought after the strong measures he had taken, this could not be done without risk. Nobody suspected that Mutiny was so near at hand: indeed, the experience of half a century would have forbidden belief to the assertion, if it had been made. The unexampled fidelity of the Sepoy Army, the passiveness and mildness of the Indian character, did not suggest for a moment to any mind, I believe, the possibility of such an explosion. In fact, no knowledge and no suspicion of such events existed any where, it would therefore not have been unreasonable, even if the cause of dissatisfaction had been in some degree founded, and if the evidence of that dissatisfaction had been less uncertain, to have concluded that delay

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address your Lordship in Council, I have heard nothing more, which silence leads me to hope that the disinclination to the Turband has become more feeble, or, perhaps, that reports have been exaggerated. Under this view, it may be judicious to postpone the publication of the Order, either to let the subject fall to the ground, as no longer the interposition of Government is required, or to reassume the issue, as your Lordship in Council may determine by future events.

(Signed) "J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieutenant-General."

"The Commander in Chief has now detailed, with as much brevity as the case would admit, the several circumstances that constitute the object of the present Dispatch to England. It appears to arise out of the subject that some general opinions should be annexed upon the state of the Country, that our Rulers at home may know how far real improvement has taken place, and whether the order of things in this part of India is amended by the variety of late Regulations.

"As a stranger, the Commander in Chief cannot feel himself competent to deliver opinions from himself; but in his zeal for the public advantage he may be permitted to state the prevailing sentiments of others, the most moderate and most experienced in the society of this Presidency.

"The general belief is, (it may not yet have reached the Government,) that the condition of the people is not as happy as it was—that their own Arrangements and their own Institutions pleased them better than our Regulations. It is reasoned with apparent force, that, slaves as they are to their own customs and habits in every trifle of their lives, the introduction of all our systems (which it is vain to make them comprehend) alarms and annoys them, and they view them

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could not have been attended with the least danger. It was natural to suppose that the assurances of Government and the explanation of their Officers, and the real harmlessness of the Turband in regard to all Cast, would convince the Sepoys of their error and groundless alarm. If these attempts proved ineffectual, it would then be time to revoke the Order.

Such was my reasoning when I first received the reference of the Commander in Chief, and while I imagined that the Turband was the sole cause of dissatisfaction. When I afterwards discovered that other Orders had been issued, really interfering, in my judgment, with their Religious Prejudices, my opinion then changed, and I no longer doubted the necessity of revoking all Orders having that tendency. In explanation of my sentiments I beg leave to refer to my Minute of the 15th July.

The opinions and assertions contained in these paragraphs are so vague, indefinite, and obscure, that I find it difficult to understand their meaning. The Commander in Chief confesses, that as a stranger he is not competent to deliver opinions upon such topics. I cannot refuse my praise to any effort towards the discovery of truth upon points of such vast political importance and delicacy. But I must say that such discussions would have been better suited to our Secret Consultations, than introduced into a Statement intended for public perusal. If doubts existed in the Commander in Chief's mind upon the policy of any part of our Civil Government, he would most properly have submitted the question to the consideration of Government. He would first, however, have convinced himself by the best information that oral or written evidence could give of their reality, he would have done this in preference to the hasty adoption of the opinions of other persons, however respectable in character, whose knowledge of the state of affairs must, from the suppression of all public information, be extremely limited, and who were in no respect responsible for the correctness or consequences of their opinions. This caution was due to justice, and to the respect which ought to be paid to the recorded decisions of the talents and wisdom of successive Councils in Bengal, followed by those of Madras. Distant as our Superior Authorities are placed, nothing is more to be deprecated than the suggestion of doubts without very great consideration, tending to shake confidence and satisfaction in the established principles of our Civil Government.

It is said to be generally believed, "That the condition of the people is not as happy as it was; that their own Arrangements and Institutions pleased

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only as preparatory to greater innovations, which may extend to every circumstance that surrounds them. It is said, while the treasures of the State are expended on Judicial Establishments throughout countries without distinction, where even Military Force, at times, is unable to preserve subjection—it would be better to enquire into the state of the inhabitants, and regulate the means of subsistence, that the numerous dependants on former power and antient establishments, the crowds of Moormen in the different provinces unemployed, may not remain in distress, and continue to excite discontent.

“The inhabitants of this country do not comprehend the convulsion at present before their eyes, within their shortest remembrance Military Establishment and Controul attracted all their attention; they understood and felt its origin, as congenial to their own notion of authority; at present they view a different order of things, and in the place of the old and experienced Officer, to whom they have long looked up with respect, they see his power and ascendancy passed away, and the youthful inexperienced Judge, or boyish Collector, occupy all and more than his former place. In England such institutions are rightly suited to the civilization and felicity of that incomparable land, but in India, where nothing is alike, it seems visionary to order all things to be the same, and it is feared will only prove the goodness of the intention.

“The people of India must be left to find happiness in their own way, and our attention directed to the security of our own singular situation, and the general advantage of the State.

“In the range of desired improvement, Philanthropy and Religion cannot fail to make a person wish to see Christianity extended, but what danger will not follow from this axiom? Apprehension of the de-

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them better than our Regulations; that, slaves to their own customs and habits, our own Institutions alarm them; and they view them only as preparatory to greater innovations.” The Commander in Chief acknowledging his entire ignorance of these subjects, I cannot enquire of him to what arrangements and institutions of the Natives allusion is here intended, whether to those existing anterior to our conquests, or to those which may have been subsequently introduced by us. It cannot surely be intended to assert, that the Mahomedan Government which prevailed in all the countries lately annexed to our territories, was more generally agreeable to the Natives of India than the British Government? Without thinking very favourably or partially of the System which obtained prior to the establishment of the Judicial System, I cannot for one moment admit a comparison between this System, imperfect as it was, and the proverbial oppression and rapacity of all Asiatic Mahomedan Governments from Constantinople to the Malay Empire. These points will, I trust, not be contested by any one. What then are these Institutions? From what I have heard by report of the opinions of certain Military Officers, I rather imagine that it is intended to attribute this innovation to the Judicial System, which is supposed to have made a revolution of all former Arrangements and Institutions, which we had previously adopted, as we found them, from our predecessors in power.

If I have construed rightly the opinion which is here given to the moderate and experienced part of the society, I must confess that I learn with astonishment that there exists a man of even slender information, not acquainted with the fact, that preservation entire to the Natives of India, of their Customs and Institutions, has formed the fundamental principle of all Legislation for India, as well by all the King's Charters and Acts in England as by all the local Governments. The great object of our Regulations has been to secure to both Mahomedans and Hindoos the benefit and protection of their own Laws, of which private and public oppression had deprived them. The only modifications introduced by us have been to remedy unjust distinction, introduced by the Mahomedans in their own favour to the prejudice of the Hindoos. But these alterations were trifling, indispensable with equal justice, and in no respect affecting the principle of the Established Laws. English Law has been introduced to the Presidencies alone, with certain exceptions where the Laws of the Natives are still in force. This is not the proper occasion of inquiry, whether the King's Courts in India, under their present constitution, have been beneficial

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sign universally prevails, however difficult to account for it; and if the pursuit be continued, or the suspicion suffered to gain further ground, our existence in the Country is at stake."

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or injurious to the interest of the Empire. Wherever the British Government has extended, these principles have formed the basis of all instructions to their Executive Officers. The Religious Establishments of the Natives have been everywhere maintained and supported; Justice has been administered according to their own Laws; and Taxation has so far been changed, as to be defined, limited, and freed from oppression and torture. I can safely assert that the local Institutions have been reformed, not subverted, by the change of Government. Our merit is, that there has been no innovation.

I know that it is believed that the Judicial System has introduced new Laws, new Customs, new Powers, and an entirely new order of things. It will be found, however, that the only novelty is, in the process of administering the same intention, and the same Orders and Regulations. The Revenues have been collected, and Justice always ordered to be administered. Before the introduction of the Courts, the process was different, the same man was Collector, Judge, and Magistrate. These duties are now divided; one collects the Revenues, another administers Justice. The Laws are the same, though the process is different. In the former arrangement, the Collector did or did not open his Court, as his disposition or other duties might determine; the whole proceedings of his Court were summary. His Judicial business was entirely secondary to his Revenue duties, to mention nothing of the injustice and oppression which may arise from the union of such powers in the hand of one individual. Now every part of the duty, both of the Judge and the Collector, is defined by rules, which neither the one nor the other can transgress without making himself liable to punishment. The inhabitants before had no fixed place where they could find redress. The Collector was in constant motion. Their principal oppressors would also be his own servants. Now the residence of the Court is established, and always open, redress can be had from an independent authority, whether the grievance proceed from private injury, or the abuse of public authority. Will it be pretended that before these Courts were established, security of person and property was known in India? If this be the fact, which I think cannot be denied, is it consistent with reason to believe that such a system should be viewed with alarm, as preparatory to greater innovation? The opinion is inconsistent with common sense and with experience. This Judicial Establishment, introduced by Lord Cornwallis, had been tried in Bengal for above twelve years. The result is most ably and satisfactorily described in the Letter of the Supreme Government, under date the 19th July 1804. The Marquis Wellesley observed of these Regulations—

" Subject to the common imperfection of every human institution, this System of Laws
 " is approved by practical experience (the surest test of human legislation), and contains an
 " active principle of continual revision, which affords the best security for progressive amend-
 " ment. It is not the effusion of vain theory, issuing from speculative principles, and di-
 " rected to visionary objects of impracticable perfection, but the solid work of plain, delibe-
 " rate, practical benevolence, the legitimate offspring of genuine wisdom and pure virtue.
 " The excellence of the general spirit of these Laws is attested by the noblest proof of just,
 " wise, and honest Government, by the restoration of happiness, tranquillity, and security to
 " an oppressed and suffering people, and by the revival of agriculture, commerce, manufac-
 " ture, and general opulence in a declining and impoverished Country."

In our own Provinces the experiment of the System has been short. It had, till within these few months, been only introduced into the Circars. The Zillahs in the Circars were established in 1802, and the good effects have been made apparent in the increasing value of property, the decrease of the rate of interest, and the general tranquillity.

In consequence of the non-administration of Criminal Justice, in the countries over which we have lately obtained the dominion, the crimes of robbery and murder have generally pre-

vailed. In the six last circuits during the years of 1803, 1804, and 1805, nine hundred and seventy-six persons have been tried for capital offences, of whom 384 have suffered death, 104 have been transported, 370 released, and 32 sentenced to hard labour, all the capital punishments have been for the crime of murder. I annex for the information of the Board, Extracts from the Reports of the Judges on Circuit, in elucidation of the good effects of this part of the system.

It is to be lamented that the Executive Officers of Justice have not more experience. It is desirable that appointments of such high importance should be filled by older men. The Laws would no doubt be better administered. But it is improvement, not perfection, that we have been endeavouring to attain. Blame can only attach to me, with whom the recommendations originated, if in the selection I have not chosen the most deserving, and the best qualified. I never did any act with more caution and consideration, and never met with greater embarrassment. I did not trust to my own judgment alone. I obtained from five or six of those persons, of whose knowledge of the servants and impartiality of choice I most respected, lists of those best calculated for the Stations. I can truly assert, that I had great interest in the success of the Institution, and none in the promotion of individuals with whom I was unacquainted. My choice was limited by circumstances not within my controul,—by the Civil Establishment having undergone no increase corresponding with the extension of the Territories, by a complete chasm in the appointment of Writers from 1783 to 1786;—from disqualification, arising in ignorance of the languages, the acquiescence of later years, and from the necessity of not taking from the superintendence of the Revenues, at the important moment of forming the Permanent Settlement, those officers best suited to the Judicial Offices. It is sufficient that the best which circumstances would admit of, was done. It is but justice, however, to these Gentlemen to say, that as far as their conduct has been tried, they have in general given satisfaction to the Sudder Court. Whatever may be the extent of their fitness or unfitness for the high offices they now fill, I think they must be excused from taking upon themselves any portion of the responsibility attaching to the Mutiny at Vellore.

When I read that “the inhabitants of this country do not comprehend the convulsion at present before their eyes, within their shortest remembrance Military Establishment and controul attracted all their attention; they understood and felt its origin, as congenial to their own notion of authority, at present they view a different order of things, and in the place of the old and experienced Officer, to whom they have long looked up with respect, they see his power and ascendancy passed away, and the youthful inexperienced Judge, or boyish Collector, occupy all and more than his former place.” It struck me that the Commander in Chief intended to convey that before the introduction of the Judicial System, the Civil and Judicial Authority was vested in Military Officers, and that the Natives preferred the Military Government and Military Law. This evidently appears to be the meaning of these remarks. It will be sufficient in answer to say, that Officers holding Military Command never have been vested (except in particular cases, not coming within the General Regulations and practice) with either the Civil or Judicial Authorities.—All Civil Power has been in the Collector.

At the same time I am inclined to believe that Military Officers holding Commands, and all Military Officers in every station, have been in the habit of exercising authority, and in many instances very undue authority, to the oppression of the people, and to the discredit of the British character. The Records bear ample testimony to this opinion.

It is easy to understand, under the former System, in what manner improper practices escaped observation. Extended as our territories are, and impressed as the inhabitants have always been with awe for the European character, and with subjection to the ruling Power, complaint did not easily reach the seat of Government. It was the interest of the Civil to keep on good terms with the Military Officer. In times when our territories were not in their present state of tranquillity and obedience, the co-operation of the Military Force was indispensable to the Collection of the Revenues; the administration of justice, the security of person and property, were not then considered primary duties. Irregularity of conduct, and improper pecuniary transactions, were either suppressed by considerations of mutual interest,

or by that worst sort of compassion, which is tremblingly alive to the feelings of a fellow-servant, and perfectly callous to those of thousands of his fellow-creatures.

The Judicial system has, I trust in God, effectually put an end to all delinquency of this kind. The Regulations have defined every man's right, and in so doing have placed effectual restriction upon the conduct of those by whom these rights might be abused. No Military Officer now, be his rank what it may, can assume any authority beyond that which he possesses by virtue of his Commission, which is sufficient to the performance of the duties assigned to him, and is considered adequate in all other parts of the world. He can levy no taxes, cannot touch any man's property, and cannot order summary trials and punishment upon persons not soldiers or followers of his camp or cantonment. But surely these powers, which I believe to have been exercised, were never delegated to Military Officers. The Government never intended that any part of the administration of its affairs should be so conducted. the arbitrary and violent exercise of authority by every Military Officer throughout India, might, as in Egypt and Turkey, by keeping the lower orders in continual fear, establish a state of more perfect slavery. However, such are not the principles upon which we govern. But, in fact, though the loss of personal power will deprive an Officer of the following and submission which may be gratifying to his feelings, yet I am not aware that the Military Force becomes on that account less efficient instruments in the hands of the State. The impression arising from the fear of a particular individual, not concerned in the general management of the other duties of a District or Province, can scarcely reach beyond the place or cantonment in which he resides. It is the discipline, the energy, the promptness, the success of the Army at large, that impresses with fear and respect the minds of our subjects, and makes the Government formidable and efficient. I have often heard the question asked, whether Battalions, or Zillah Courts, were most conducive to tranquillity? My opinion has always been, that the one was as necessary as the other. There cannot be a more powerful arm than Law justly administered. Its effects are universal and omnipotent; every one is restrained while he is also protected by it. Every one fears and loves it. While order and happiness are introduced in private society, respect and gratitude to the Government by whom these benefits are granted, are at the same time established.

The Bayonet will produce tranquillity — the Law alone will confirm and preserve it.

I trust it will appear from these remarks that the *Convulsion* described is entirely groundless, the invention probably of disappointed ambition. The Military Officer will be exactly placed where the Constitution always placed him. If he never assumed illegal authority, he will find no change; if he did, he will be deprived of it. The Army I know do object to the Judicial System, and their objections are, in my opinion, the strongest proofs, if proofs were wanting, of the necessity of the Establishment.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

Fort St. George,
February 27th, 1807.

(9)

MINUTE OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT.

Fort St. George, July 17, 1806.

IT is my determination to refrain from giving any opinion upon the late transactions at Vellore, as well as to suspend my belief or disbelief of the various rumours and representations that have since been transmitted, until the Report of the Commission shall have been received. particular care has been taken in the selection of the Members of that Commission, that the Government may be in possession of a clear, sensible, and dispassionate Report of

what has passed. The Commission consists of old and respectable Civil and Military Officers, unconnected with those unfortunate transactions, distant from the scene of action, and as likely as individuals so circumstanced can be, to go to the Enquiry with coolness and impartiality. I have thought it necessary to say thus much, in order to excuse myself for the present, and to reserve to myself the full liberty at a future period of making such remarks upon the Letters of the Commander in Chief, and the reports of others upon which I may not concur in opinion, as may appear necessary.

In the present state of things I would beg leave to recommend, that the wish of Government may be intimated to the Commander in Chief, that the Court of Inquiry now sitting at Vellore may terminate upon the arrival of the Commission; and further, that all Judicial Process may be suspended until the Report of the Commission is made known. I am induced to offer this opinion, because I think the punishment of the remaining Prisoners requires to be managed with delicacy—Delay cannot be injurious—the example of Severity has been complete—It is of importance to avoid precipitation, which may have the appearance of Revenge. The worst consequence to be apprehended from these sad events, is the existence of distrust and animosity between the Government and its Army, all pains must be taken to counteract this feeling, I would therefore recommend that the Trials should proceed slowly, but with firmness—the Delinquents must be punished—but, as far as we are able, let the punishment appear to proceed from the steady operation of Law and of Justice, rather than from the feelings of Anger and Hatred.

I beg leave also to recommend that the Commander in Chief may be requested, when he has made such arrangements for the distribution of the Troops and for the Military Service as he may deem fit, to repair to the Presidency, in order that we may be assisted by his advice. The naked opinion of the Court of Inquiry has left us without the means of judging of the depth or of the extent of the plot asserted to exist. I confess I am not disposed to be credulous to great danger arising from internal intrigues unconnected with our Troops. To the discontent and possible disaffection of our Army, I am indeed quite alive; no evil can be more alarming: but I trust that the measure about to be taken, by removing the causes of dissatisfaction, will allay the immediate irritation, and I feel confidence that by the attention of the Officers, under the zealous and able superintendence of the Commander in Chief, complete harmony may be restored.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

(r)

MINUTE OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF.

IN the most secret manner I lay before Government two Papers, the one perhaps not of the same serious nature with the other, though in part connected with the second, which, for importance and delicacy of proceeding, may go the extent of our Dominion in this part of India, if not acted upon with promptitude, energy, and judgment.

The possibility of general disaffection in our Native Cavalry, or a considerable portion thereof, is a subject at this moment that demands all the powers of the understanding to reach the truth, and unconnected as it stands with any alleged cause of discontent among the Sepoy Battalion, the real sources of imputed or suspected disloyalty must be sought, and every veil that conceals the truth torn away. Let sincerity, and the honest dictate of our best judgment, proceed upon an Inquiry, encompassed with delicacy and the closest reserve.

I profess I am unwilling to admit the idea, it may be without just foundation, but if it be true, can it be imputed to another cause, than the attempt to restore the Mussulman Government, certainly in the Mysore, perhaps even in the Carnatic?

Place all the late circumstances together, bring to view the various artifices employed to disgust the People with the European name, the machination to corrupt the Soldiers, and it

must result that some design is in agitation in favour of the antient order of things, and that our best security depends on the earliest persuasion of its existence, and the most obvious means of frustration adopted

I think it my duty to implore the Government to undertake the most energetic, though secret measures for information, and at once avow the just suspicions that attach to the Descendants of Tippoo at Vellore, and its fatal Pettah, and by the dissolution of all that dangerous fabric, proclaim that the hostile design is known, and that we are no longer the dupes of Secrecy and Intrigue. In my opinion the first acts will secure and restore our safety, as the ultimate project will at once be rendered hopeless from the distant removal of the Progeny of Tippoo.

If it be argued, it will be right to await the result of the Commission now sitting at Vellore, without reserve, I reply, I have no faith in the talent of that Committee, as a general Body. This is not the moment to conceal opinion, however it may be far from my nature to give personal offence. It is ungracious to name individuals; but his Lordship in Council, I am persuaded, will acknowledge, at a period of the most critical import to the well-being of the State, that the proceedings of that Commission should be guided by a person of acknowledged judgment, and free from the imputation of any prejudice. I speak the language of every person at Madras *. I disclaim the most distant idea of disrespect, and anxiously solicit his Lordship will forgive this faithful discharge of my duty

I again adjure this Council to direct the most cautious secrecy in the Proceedings of this day.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieutenant-General.

Madras, August 2d, 1806.

Extract of a Letter from Colonel HARCOURT, commanding Vellore, to his Excellency the Commander in Chief, under date the 31st July, 1806

* I HAVE now, in support of the opinion that I have formed, to acquaint your Excellency, that Jemidai Shaik Cossim (under the sentence of the Court-Martial) expressed a strong desire to see Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes, wishing, as he stated, to relieve his mind by acquainting the Lieutenant-Colonel with some circumstances relating to the business of the 10th. Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes accordingly saw the Prisoner, and the outline of his communication is contained in the accompanying Paper, in which I think your Excellency will find some important intelligence. The Prisoner added that whatever sentence the Court-Martial had passed upon him, he acknowledged the extent of his crimes, and that he felt some atonement for his guilt, in the communication of those circumstances which he wished to make, under the most solemn proofs of their truth. He added his earnest injunctions to Colonel Forbes to recommend to me the utmost vigilance, lest the Native Guards † now on duty should be corrupted, and seemed (as Colonel Forbes thought) to wish it to be understood, that he had strong grounds for this injunction.

† Furnished from the 4th N. Cavalry.

Substance of a Conversation between Major MUNRO and a Subidar of distinguished Character and Services in the Native Cavalry.

THE Native Officer stated, that he had been employed in the Company's Service upwards of thirty years—that he had observed the justice, moderation, and respect for all religious sects, which the British Government had always manifested, and that the obligations of gratitude and duty demanded from him, in the actual circumstances of the Service, a

* This sort of assertion occurs frequently in Sir John Cradock's Minutes. It is not intended to impute wilful inaccuracy to the Commander in Chief; but it will be obviously extremely difficult for any man placed in high authority to be correctly informed of the public sentiment upon a matter of opinion which he has already very warmly and decidedly professed. In such cases it is usual for prudence to be silent, and for flattery to misrepresent.

full disclosure of all that he had been able to discover. He affirmed that those circumstances were entirely unprecedented in the Carnatic, feelings appeared to prevail in the Country and among the Troops which he had never before observed in the course of his service, and they would spread with rapidity, unless effectual measures were adopted to put a stop to them. He stated that his own family was one of respectability in the Country; it enjoyed Jaghires and other advantages under the Company's Government, and it was his duty to make every return in his power for those benefits.

The Subidar mentioned that the information which he had received was only of a general nature, but that he had every reason to place unlimited confidence in its truth. He stated that sentiments of disaffection to the British Government were entertained by the 4th, 5th, and 7th Regiments of Native Cavalry. When the first intelligence of the Insurrection at Vellore arrived at Conatoor, Lieutenant-Colonel Floyer, commanding the 4th Regiment Native Cavalry, detached a Naigue and four Troopers to learn the particulars. In the meantime the Regiment was ordered to march, the men debated among themselves regarding their destination, and *whether or not they would march*. Before the march took place the Naigue's party returned, however, with accounts of the success of the British Troops at Vellore, when the Regiment, learning this event, marched without any appearance of hesitation. Of the extent of the disaffection in the 5th and 7th Regiments, the Subidar could not give an exact account, but he said that no doubt existed of its having made considerable progress in those Corps.

On enquiring from the Subidar the causes of this disaffection, he said, that it was difficult to state all of them, but he believed they arose principally from the intrigues of Tippoo's family and their adherents. A number of persons formerly in the Sultaun's service or their relations were now serving in our Native Regiments, and were most active instruments of spreading disaffection in them. He said that the Agents or the Friends of the Family were employed all over the Country, that their intrigues extended to every place, and were carried on with activity above the Ghauts. He said that the Country near Cuddalore was as much disaffected as Vellore.

The station of
5th Native Ca-
valry is near
Pondicherry.

The thanks of the Commander in Chief and Government were returned to the Subidar for his fidelity and zeal. After some conversation it was agreed that he should proceed to Arcot and Vellore, and endeavour to procure the most authentic accounts of the causes of the disaffection, of the names of the persons principally employed in spreading it, of the extent to which it has reached, and of the means most likely to suppress it. The Subidar promised to exert the most strenuous endeavours to perform the instructions of the Commander in Chief, he received assurances of the disposition of Government to distinguish his fidelity and zeal by suitable rewards.

(Signed)

J. MUNRO,
Pers. Int.

The Subidar wishes his name to be concealed for the present, but the greatest reliance may be placed in his fidelity and attachment, for they have been repeatedly manifested under circumstances of peculiar delicacy and difficulty.

The Subidar first communicated the foregoing information to the Officer commanding his Corps, by whom it was repeated to Colonel Gillespie, and the conversation between Major Munro and the Subidar took place in Colonel Gillespie's presence.

Substance of the Information given by JEMIDAR SHAIK COSSIM of the 1st Battalion 1st Regiment, before Lieutenant Colonel FORBES and Lieutenant COOMBS.

Thursday, July 31st, 1806.

WHEN the 2d Battalion 1st Regiment passed Vellore, the day that it arrived, and the day that it halted, a Meeting took place between the Native Commissioned and Non-

Jemidar, 3rd
Batt 1st Reg.
Shaik Secun-
der, Light
Company.

Commissioned of that Corps, and some of the 1st Battalion 1st Regiment (amongst whom was Havildar Shaik, Secunder of the Light Company) on the subject of the new Turbans, at a Tomb called Aminpeer. A Mussulman Jemidar of the 2d of the 1st (who had formerly belonged to Langley's Battalion) was particularly forward, and declared, that although the whole Battalion might wear it, *he* never would. That the 2nd Battalion 1st Regiment would look to the 1st of the 1st for an example; and that if the 1st of the 1st wore it, the two Corps would become enemies to each other; but that if the 1st of the 1st refused it, and any disturbance took place, the 2nd of the 1st would come up and support them.

Shaik Nutter of the Grenadiers and Abdul Khader of Light Company of the 1st of the 1st were both present at the meeting; there were 15 or 16 Native Commissioned and Non-Commissioned of the 2nd of the 1st, and several Sepoys of the 1st of the 1st.

Jemidar Shaik
Bin, and Je-
midar Shaik
Dewan, 1st of
1st
Havildar Syed
Esuph, 1st of
1st

After the 2nd of the 1st had marched, Jemidar Shaik Cossim states, that he went to the house of Jemidar Shaik Bin of the 1st of the 1st; a relation of theirs came out of the house, and told him that the two Jemidars (who are related) were disputing with each other, which of the two should die in the cause of resisting the new Turband, each desiring the other to take care of the children, and each offering to sacrifice his own life for the other. On coming away from the house, he met Havildar Syed Esuph going to it, who, on his return, told him that the two Jemidars were still quarrelling on the same subject.

In consequence of the irregular conduct in the 2d of the 4th, when a Troop of the 19th Dragoons arrived from Arcot, to escort the Prisoners of the 2nd-4th to Madras, Jemidar Shaik Cossim was ordered with a Guard of the 1st of the 1st to accompany them, and on the morning before they marched Shaik Cossim says he came into the Fort very early, and was met at the gate by Emaun Khan of the Light Company, who advised him to be cautious or he might be killed, telling him that between 600 and 700 of the 4th had been ready in the Barracks all night, and prepared to mutiny; that about 200 had also collected on the outside with the intention of attacking the Cavalry, and rescuing the Prisoners, but that the Cote Havildar of the 8th Company 2nd of the 4th, had addressed the men, pointing out the folly of their conduct, and telling them that the guilty only, after trial, would be punished, and recommending to them to be quiet, they listened to his advice and broke up.

At Arcot, on his arrival with the Prisoners, Shaik Cossim states, that the Cavalry Troopers came about and amongst his Sepoys, abused them, spit at them, and made use of taunting expressions, and told them, "that they were Sepoys and black men, as well as "then Prisoners, and that instead of assisting in guarding them, they should have united "with them, and supported their cause." The same conduct was observed by the Troopers on Shaik Cossim's return with his guard to Arcot, after having left Madras.

During the march from Vellore to Madras, Syed Ameer, Naigue of the Grenadiers, and Sepoy Rando, asked and obtained leave to go on in advance to Wallajabad on rejoining the Guard they told the Jemidar that the 2nd of the 14th was making up the Turband, and that Major Haslewood had informed his Corps, the 2nd of the 1st, that there was a General Order for all Corps to make them up: the Sepoys of the 2nd of the 1st told them that they would wear them if the 1st of the 1st did; that they looked to the 1st of the 1st for an example, being, as they termed it, the *right wing of their Brigade*. On Shaik Cossim's return to Vellore from detachment, about three days after he was Officer of the Day, and on going to report to Colonel Forbes, on the way to his house he saw Jemidar Shaik Dewan at the Aminpeer, who called him, and inquired the news: Shaik Cossim told him that the first of the 23d at Madras, and the 2nd of the 14th at Wallajabad, were making up the new Turbands, and that they (the 1st of the 1st) must do the same. Jemidar Shaik Dewan replied, "What "is it you say? We must wear it, *No*. Three or four of us must unite, and consider this "business—Death is better than to wear the Turband; and three or four of us will kill the rest "if they wear it: and if all the rest wear it, I *never* will, but will myself kill several, and then "go away from the Battalion." Shaik Cossim replied, "You are a *Peer ke murred*, and I "am but an ignorant youth, I shall be guided by your advice." He then left the other and came away, but was called back and desired by the Jemidar never to mention what had passed, adjuring him in the name of *Aminpeer*.

The Sepoys first shewed symptoms of discontent on the first arrival of the new-pattern Turband, and the people about the Palace *then* began to tamper with the Sentries posted about the Palace, telling them, that "if they wore the new Turband they would be soon ordered to wear hats, that the time was now come to mutiny and be active, that the Sepoys throughout the whole Country were all dissatisfied and discontented at the new Turband, and that if they seized that opportunity, they might immediately establish the Mogul Government. This conversation was a *hiss-ea* (when the Hircarachs were not present) to the Sentries about the Palace, by whom it was reported to the other Sepoys; and Shaik Cossim states, that, from the arrival of the new Turband, this kind of conversation was perpetually carried on in the Barracks by the Non-commissioned and Sepoys, and that it was well known to the Native Officers. and that Shaik Ally the Native Adjutant, and Subidar Hussman Khan, declined making it known to the Commanding Officer, but rather suppressed the complaints they had made to them, and in particular one day the whole Grenadier Company having shewn much discontent, the Subidar intended carrying eight men who had come forward to Colonel Forbes, but Jemidar Shaik Ally prevented him; from this time frequent meetings and consultations took place, and the people of the Palace, and the people in the Pettah, took every occasion of fomenting the discontent of the Sepoys.

Alla O Deen, a foster-brother of Moizud Deen, was the medium of intercourse between the Palace and the Sepoys. He frequently attended the meetings and consultations that were held at the house of Subidar Shaik Adam, 2nd of the 23d, and of Hyman Saib, Sepoy of the Light Company 1st of 1st, and brought them news and advice from the Palace. He told them that if the 2d of the 1th had not gone away, every thing would have been settled long before this, and the Prince's Government established, and blamed the 1st of the 1st for not having joined the 2d of the 4th on so good an occasion; and the Jemidar thinks such might have been the case, but for the coolness between the two Battalions, 1st of 1st and 2nd of 4th. He told them that the Prince Moizud Deen wished the Sepoys to take and keep the Fort for *eight days* only, by which time he would have ten thousand men from Gurrumeondah, that letters were already written to that Polygar, who was a powerful man and great friend of the Princes; that letters were also ready for the Vancatygherry and Callastry Polygars, and for several Sudars now in the service of *Poornah*, who had formerly been in the service of Tippoo Sultan; and that the Fort and Pettah once gained, Troops would join them from all quarters.

Alla O Deen was present when the Oath was administered, and promised high rank to Subidar Shaik Adam, and said he should be Commandant, and Jemidar Shaik Hussain second, but no other nominations were then made.

Shaik Cossim says, that Shaik Nutter, Sepoy of the Grenadiers, and Emaun Khan, of the Light Company, had both been very active in gaining over many of the Pensioners who understood the management of the guns, and Gun Lascars who lived outside, who all promised to come in and assist us, as soon as they were called upon, and promised to be ready if they would only let them know the day fixed upon. A Jemidar of Pensioners had also promised to be ready, and a great number of the People of the Pettah were also held in readiness to assist, as soon as called upon.

The day fixed for the Insurrection had been twice before changed. It was once fixed upon to have taken place before the 2nd-23d were admitted into the plot, or made acquainted with it. It was then put off, it was afterwards to have taken place *one night* after the 2nd-23d had been acquainted with it, when Subidar Shaik Adam and Jemidar Shaik Cossim were both on guard, and was put off: and it actually took place *sooner* than was finally decided on. The day determined upon was on the *succeeding Monday*. Jemidar Shaik Hussain of the 23d, being drunk, occasioned its taking place on the night of the 9th; about nine o'clock a consultation was held at the Barracks, and it was resolved to commence the Insurrection that night at two o'clock, but the determination having been taken *so late*, the people of the Pettah were not apprized of the intention, and it was too late for them to come in. Shaik Cossim states it was a resolution suddenly taken, and the Native Officers and people in the Palace were not acquainted with the intention, otherwise the result would have been different. He also says

that it was a fortunate circumstance that the Sepoys being occupied in plundering the Paymaster's house, and carrying off the treasure, their attention was so much engaged that they would not again collect, or the Princes would have come out and headed them, as just before that large bodies had been collected, and the Princes prepared to join them; and he is convinced that but for this circumstance the Princes would have been out.

Five or six days before the night of the Conspiracy, Ramdeen, Sepoy of the Light Company 1st of 1st, was Sentry at Mohuddeen's Palace, he was posted at two o'clock, and between that time and *four*, Mohuddeen came out three times, and enquired of him "if the Insurrection had not been yet," Ramdeen replied, it would presently (this being the night it had been fixed for). Ramdeen was one who had taken the Oaths Sultan Mohuddeen told him, "I am ready with 500 men in my own pay, outside, to assist." On the morning of the Mutiny Sultan Mohuddeen was employed in distributing beetle and food to the Sepoys, and Havildar Shaik, Secunder of the Light Company 1st of 1st, was on the top of the Palace calling the Sepoys together.

On the morning of the Mutiny, Prince Moizud Deen having exchanged beetle with Syed Gaffier's Son, gave him a Sword and a party of Sepoys, and ordered him to go and take possession of the Hill Fort. He also sent to Jenmidar Shaik Cossim to know if he should come out and join; the Jenmidar sent word, "No, I am in command of the Troops." Shaik Cossim states that Alla O-Deen was present when he received the Oath, and it was then resolved that the Mutiny should take place two days after, but that Havildar Fakeer Mahomed persuaded them to postpone it till pay was issued to the men.

Subidai Shaik
Emaun Jemidars
Rungapah, Ramasamy.
Havildar Shaik
Modun, Gopal-
loo, Mostelli-
goo, Apparas,
Pickagerroo

Shaik Cossim declares that the secret consultations of the Sepoys were well known to every *Subidar*, *Jemidar*, and *Havildar* in the Corps, except those in the margin; that 300 men of the 1st of 1st had received and taken the Oath, that parties of four and five met together and took it, and that it was generally so contrived that three or four of those who had taken it were put on each guard.

Shaik Cossim states, that with the exception of Subidar Syed Nully, who was killed, and Subidar Ramalingum Naig, who was on command, every Native Officer in the 23d well knew of the disaffection of the two Corps, and that some plans were in agitation, but only the Officers in the margin, No. 1, took the Oaths, and two Sepoys who were admitted into the secret, Cawder of the 4th, and Mohuddeen Khan of the 3d Companies, but that the Officers, No. 2, in the margin, knew of the secret consultations. Havildar Cawder of the Light Company had volunteered to shoot Colonel Forbes when the Mutiny should take place, and was sent as Orderly on the 9th, and on going away told the Jenmidar, "he should be ready to do his part when the affair took place." All the Grenadiers of the 1st of 1st were in the secret. Shaik Nutter told the Sepoys at the gate to shoot Colonel Forbes.

No 1.
Subidar Shaik
Adam. Jemid-
dar Shaik Hus-
sain Subidai
Shaik Homed.
Havildar
Fakeer Ma-
homed.
No. 2
Subidar Moor
Mahomed
Subidar Shaik
Emaun. Su-
bidar Shaik
Ahmed.

Syed Mohuddeen, Sepoy of the 3d Company 1st of 1st, offered, if Moizud Deen would give him the charge of the Pettah, in four days he would collect provisions for ten thousand men. Shaik Cossim states, that when a party of Troopers arrived from Cannatoor with a gun or tumbril, and remained outside, Shaik Nutter and Emaun Khan went out to them, and communicated the intentions of the Sepoys to mutiny. The Troopers told them if any thing took place that night they would come in and assist, and if they sent information to them when the Mutiny had begun, they would get their Regiment to come and join them.

The Oath administered was —

1st. Secrecy.

2d Destruction of all the Europeans.

3d. Establishment of Moizud Deen's Government.

No attempt to corrupt the Sepoys was made till the new Turband arrived, to his knowledge. Emaun Khan was seen by Shaik Cossim in a Mogul's dress after the arrival of the Cavalry; and Shaik Cossim says, he is convinced that he must *now* either be concealed in the Palace, or put to death, as he was entrusted with the whole secret from the commencement, and could have discovered the whole of the Plot and every Individual concerned in it.

(s)

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD W. C. BENTINCK,
GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL, FORT ST. GEORGE

MY LORD,

WE have had the honour to receive this day your Lordship's in Council Dispatch, dated the 31st *ultimo*, by H. M. ship Rattlesnake

2 The important contents of that Dispatch have had our immediate deliberation; and with a view to communicate to your Lordship in Council our sentiments upon the subject with the least practicable delay, we have the honour to enclose the copy of a Minute delivered by the Governor General on this occasion, in the tenor of which we entirely concur.

3. Your Lordship in Council will observe, that we approve the measure of dispatching the Sons of Tippoo Sultan to Bengal, but that our apprehension of the dangerous consequences of sending a Regiment of Europeans to Fort St. George, induces us to withhold our consent to that measure.

4. We most earnestly recommend to your Lordship in Council to pursue the course of conduct suggested in the Governor General's Minute. No danger can, in our judgment, be so great and so extensive as the dissolution of the bonds of confidence between Government and its Native Troops, which must be the consequence of sending a reinforcement of European Troops to Fort St. George, and of attending the indications of mistrust and suspicion.

5. We earnestly call upon your Lordship in Council to adopt measures for the speedy conclusion of the Investigations depending at Vellore, and to abstain from the prosecution of them at other Stations. We are anxious that the principles so wisely recommended in Lord William Bentinck's Minute of the 15th *ultimo*, should govern the proceedings of your Lordship in Council, and that every measure indicating the existence of mistrust and alarm should be cautiously avoided.

6. The considerations under which we have deemed it to be our duty to withhold our consent to the dispatch of a Regiment of Europeans from Bengal, suggest the expediency of preventing the arrival of any European Troops from Ceylon, if it be now practicable to prevent it.

7. We entertain a full confidence that the removal of the Princes, combined with the abrogation of the obnoxious Orders, will have the effect of suppressing every symptom of disaffection, unless agitation be supported or revived by the appearance of alarm, and the insurrection of mistrust and suspicion.

8. We observe that your Lordship in Council states merely the probability of your dispatching to Bengal the principal adherents of the Princes. We are of opinion that it would be highly advisable to carry that measure into effect; and we accordingly request that your Lordship in Council will dispatch the adherents of the Princes also by the earliest opportunity to this Presidency.

We have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

(Signed)

G. H. BARLOW.
G. UDNY.
J. LUMSDEN.

Fort William, 11th August, 1806.

(s)

GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S MINUTE.

Fort William, 11th August, 1806.

I DO not think from any part of the Communication from Fort St. George, contained in the Right Honourable the Governor in Council's Letter of the 31st July just received, that there is any reason to believe that the late event at Vellore has been the result of a long and deep-laid Conspiracy of the nature described in that Dispatch. but even admitting that the Princes had been endeavouring during a long period of time to secure a party in their favour throughout the Carnatic and Mysore by means of their emissaries, and that their views had been directed to the object of alienating the attachment of the Sepoys, I think that there is no reason to believe that these efforts had made any progress, or would have made any among the Sepoys, but for the unfortunate Order respecting the Turbans and Marks of Cast. These Orders afforded a most favourable instrument for the prosecution of such designs. It is evident that the Orders created disaffection independent of any other cause; nothing therefore could be more obvious or more easy than to misrepresent their intent in a manner to inflame that disaffection. There is no appearance of any general plan of insurrection or confederacy. The Princes concluded that half their object was accomplished by the prevalent discontent, they had only to improve the opportunity. Then it was, as appears by the deposition of Shaik Cossim, that they began to seduce the Native Officers and Sepoys at Vellore by employing the instrument offered to their hands, in the Orders regarding the Turband and Dress of the Native Troops.

I am satisfied in my own mind that these Orders constituted the active and vital principle of the whole plan. If so, those Orders constituted the real cause of the past and present danger.

The Commander in Chief and the Government of Fort St. George appear to deduce a different conclusion from the three facts stated by the Subidar who conversed with Major Munro; namely, first, "That those circumstances" (an expression which, according to the content, refers to the preceding expression, "*the actual circumstances of the Service*") "were entirely unprecedented in the Carnatic; that feelings appeared to prevail in the Country and among the Troops which he had never before observed in the course of his service." Secondly, "That sentiments of disaffection to the British Government were entertained by the 4th, 5th, and 7th Regiments of Native Cavalry;" and, Thirdly, "That a number of persons, formerly in the Sultan's service, or their relations, were now serving in our Native Regiments, and were most active instruments of spreading disaffection in them, and that the agents, or the Friends of the Family, were employed all over the Country; that their intrigues extended to every place, and were carried on with activity above the Ghauts."

The first of the above stated facts is nothing more than a description of the disaffection produced by the General Orders, and fomented by the Agents of the Princes: for there is nothing in the whole of the information before Government which warrants a suspicion that the change of sentiment in the Country and among the Troops had taken place before the promulgation of the Orders.

The Commander in Chief and the Government appear to deduce the inference above stated from the Second of the before-mentioned facts, under the consideration that the change of Turband not extending to the men of the Cavalry, *that* could not be the cause of *their* disaffection. This, however, appears to be an erroneous conclusion; for, in the first place, it is to be supposed that the prohibition of distinctive Marks of Cast, Ear-rings, &c. extended to the Cavalry; and, secondly, without reference to that circumstance, the contagious spirit of bigotry or offended prejudice, is amply sufficient to account for the men of

the Cavalry making common cause with those of the Infantry on such an occasion. To invade the sacred prejudices of one portion of a Community is to invade the prejudices of the whole. The same observation is applicable to all the Native Inhabitants of the Country, and will account for the feeling which the Subidar states to prevail in the *Country*, as well as among the Troops.

The Third fact is admitted as a means of animating the discontents arising from the obnoxious Orders.

The Government and Commander in Chief of Fort St. George are probably not yet aware of the sudden and violent effects of the slightest appearance of a violation of sacred prejudices among the Natives of India. They are disposed, therefore, to ascribe to distant and unknown causes that disaffection, of which, to a certain extent at least, they must admit the cause to be proximate and certain. In my judgment the presumptive evidence of the latter position is so strong, that it would be safe to proceed on an assumption of its truth, and imprudent to act upon a different principle.

The course of proceeding to be adopted under a supposition that the disaffection of the Army has been occasioned by a long continued and deep-laid Conspiracy, existing in a state of considerable progress antecedently to the promulgation of the General Orders, and that which should be pursued under the view of the case which I have taken, are different: the former case might require measures of a coercive nature, an active scrutiny, and a firmness and decision calculated to overawe the disaffected; the latter case requires the removal of the cause of discontent by the abrogation of the obnoxious Orders, the restoration of confidence to the Troops by shewing them confidence on the part of the Government, and the very reverse of all coercive measures.

The appearance of coercion in the second case might have the effect of rendering the cause of the Sepoys the cause of Religion; the desperate danger of such an event need not be pointed out. Prudence seems to require that Government should sedulously guard against its approach.

Upon this ground principally I entertain considerable apprehension of the consequences of dispatching a Regiment of Europeans from Bengal to Fort St. George. It would be a manifest indication that Government has lost its confidence in the Native Troops, and that the European Troops are introduced to coerce or overawe them. This effect will be aided by the extensive investigations which the Government of Fort St. George appears disposed to pursue; the European and Native Troops will be rendered adverse parties, confidence will be destroyed, and it is not perhaps within the compass of human prudence and wisdom to restore it. Imagination can scarcely assign a limit to the consequences of such a state of things. But there are other questions to be considered: would the addition of one or two European Regiments enable the Government to coerce the body of Native Troops when thus placed (it may be said) in a state of hostility? Would the Sepoys in such a case depend upon themselves alone? Would they not excite the embers of revolt in every District of the Company's Possessions? Would they not apply for foreign aid? These appear to be considerations that should be deliberately weighed before the adoption of a measure which tends to dissolve the bonds of confidence between Government and its Native Troops.

I am satisfied there is much less danger from the prosecution of an opposite course; whatever may be the real distrust of the Government of Fort St. George, every endeavour should in my opinion be employed to conceal it. The investigations should, I think, be limited to Vellore; the greatest caution should be observed in punishing instances of disaffection in individuals of the Native Troops at other Stations, which in the course of those investigations may be substantiated; even in those which it may be proved that such disaffection did not originate in the promulgation of the General Orders, or was not connected with them, for the victims of punishment might with little difficulty give a turn to the case, and propagate the dangerous sentiment, that they suffered in the cause of Religion.

I think that the investigation should be closed, and the agitation of the late event be composed as speedily as possible, that (as originally proposed by Lord William Bentinck) the principal perpetrators of the Massacre at Vellore alone should be brought to exemplary pu-

nishment, and a general amnesty should be extended to the rest. If the agitation is kept up by protracted and extended investigations until the fair season shall return, advantage may be taken of it by those among the States and Classes of India, whose views of turbulence, rapine, and ambition, might find in such a state of things an opportunity of success.

This course of conduct appears to me to afford the best prospect of restoring order, harmony, and confidence.

The removal of the Princes appears highly judicious. Even if their intrigues have had a greater share in the propagation of disaffection than I suppose them to have had, their removal will suppress the hopes of the disaffected, and combined with the abrogation of the General Orders, will dispose them to revert to their duty of allegiance, the existence of which can alone produce security. Another great advantage of removing the Princes will be, that it will tend to produce a general belief that they are, or are considered to be, the sole source of the late transactions at Vellore.

If so extensive a Conspiracy as the Government of Fort St. George appears to apprehend really exists, the moment of its active operation will be that of the removal of the Princes from Vellore. The reinforcement from Bengal cannot arrive in time to provide against that event. The moment of danger therefore will be past, or the evil will have occurred before the arrival of the Troops: it may be urged that the reinforcement would be particularly requisite under the occurrence of that evil. Our resolutions then must be taken on a comparison of probabilities, and I think there is no proportion between the hazard of such a general Insurrection, and the dangers which seem to attach to the measure of sending a Regiment from Bengal.

(Signed)

G. H. BARLOW,

(t)

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK,
GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL, FORT ST. GEORGE.

MY LORD,

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship in Council's Dispatches of the 28th and 29th *ultimo*. We have also received the Documents transmitted by direction of your Lordship in Council in your Chief Secretary's Letter of the 29th and 30th *ultimo*, and 1st *instant*.

2. The perusal of all these Documents has confirmed the sentiments stated in our Dispatches of the 1st and 11th *instant*, relative to the foundation of the discontent which has lately appeared among the Native Troops of the Presidency of Fort St. George. We are unable to trace any evidence of that general disaffection, the supposed existence of which has diminished your Lordship's confidence in the allegiance of the Native Army, exceeding the limits of that which is manifestly connected with an apprehended invasion of the sanctimonious prejudices of the Native Troops. That disaffection, wherever it has appeared, has coincided in point of time with the promulgation and enforcement of the General Orders, respecting the change of Turbans and the prohibition of distinctive Marks of Cast. It appears from the indisputable evidence of Jemidar Shaik Cossim, that the agents of the family of Tippoo Sultan at Vellore did not begin to tamper with the Sepoys until they had shewn signs of discontent on the arrival of the pattern of the new Turband. Not the slightest symptom of discontent and disaffection is imputed to any Corps previously to the promulgation of these Orders; nor does it appear that any other instrument for exciting revolt was employed, than that which was afforded by the obnoxious Orders. Under the confirmed impression of these sentiments, we remain convinced of the importance of adopting the principle and temper of

proceeding recommended in our Dispatch to your Lordship in Council of the 11th *instant*, and your Lordship will probably have anticipated from the tenor of that Dispatch our judgment upon the question referred to us in your Lordship's Dispatch of the 29th *ultimo*, relative to the detention of His Majesty's 19th Regiment of Light Dragoons and 94th Regiment of Infantry, under orders of embarkation for Europe not only are the measures of precaution suggested by your Lordship in Council unnecessary, but with reference to the presumed foundation of the late discontent among the Native Troops, are, in our opinion, rather of a dangerous tendency. We have already stated the consequences which we apprehend from the adoption of those measures. We cannot therefore afford our sanction to the detention of the Regiments in question, professedly suggested upon the principle of those precautionary measures. The cases which might justify a deviation from the positive Orders of His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief with regard to the relief of Regiments serving in India, must be of a nature peculiarly urgent, and your Lordship in Council is apprized of the grounds of our opinion, that in the present case a deviation from those Orders is not only unnecessary, but injurious to the interests of the public Service; but even admitting the principle upon which your Lordship in Council founds the expediency of detaining those Regiments, we apprehend that the diminution of actual force occasioned by their embarkation would be very inconsiderable, as under any circumstances, most of the men would probably be drafted, with their own consent, into other Regiments; independently of which consideration, your Lordship in Council will be informed by the enclosed Copy of a Letter from the Secret Committee, dated the 1st of April, received overland, that 2000 men of His Majesty's Army and 500 Recruits were to be embarked for India in the China ships appointed to sail about the 20th or 25th of April, a considerable proportion of which we should at all events deem it advisable to assign to the Presidency of Fort St. George. This accession of European Force, wholly unconnected with the late events at Vellore, would alone preclude the necessity of detaining His Majesty's 19th Regiment of Dragoons and 94th of Infantry; and we accordingly request that your Lordship in Council will permit the embarkation of those Regiments at the time originally intended.

We deem it unnecessary to advert to specific points of discussion and proceeding communicated in the late Dispatches from Fort St. George: The obligation of our public duty under the information which we possess, and with reference to the actual progress of the measures of your Lordship's Government, as they relate to the subject of the late events on the Coast, at the time when this Dispatch may reach Fort St. George, merely requiring the repetition of our earnest recommendation, that your Lordship in Council will regulate your future proceedings by the general principles described in our Dispatches of the 1st and 11th *instant*, the observance of which appears to us to involve not only the immediate interests of the Government of Fort St. George, but the security and prosperity of every branch of the British Empire in India.

We have the honour to be,

&c &c. &c.

(Signed)

G. H. BARLOW.
LAKE.
G. UDNY.
J. LUMSDEN.

Fort William, August 23d, 1806.

(u)

Par. 214. While in this uncertainty, the deposition of the Jemidar Shaik Cossim, and the information furnished by the Subidar of Cavalry, contained in a preceding part of this Dispatch, were communicated to us. These papers, in all material respects, tended to confirm each other, and to afford sufficient evidence, that the spirit of disaffection was more extensively spread among our troops than we at first apprehended, and that the contagion had reached the Native Cavalry, which was the part of our Native Army in which we had before placed our chief reliance.

215. The disaffection of the Native Cavalry presented a prospect which was particularly alarming, from the circumstance of the greatest part of that body of Troops being composed of Moormen, who, under the disposition which they had evinced, might be expected to shew themselves forward in support of the Mussulman interests. Bigotry, ambition, and every passion that most strongly predominates in the minds of persons of that Sect, might be supposed to combine in leading to such an event.

216. We had reason to believe, that the precautions which had been taken would be sufficient to check farther attempts on the part of the Princes themselves at Vellore; but it was impossible to judge how far their machinations might have been already successful, or whether the same hostile spirit might not have pervaded the numerous and disorderly Moormen who are spread over every part of the Territories under this Government; and might not have linked the whole or the principal part in a confederacy tending to the object of drawing our troops from their allegiance, and of exciting general commotion.

217. It would be difficult to convey to your Honourable Committee an adequate impression of the wretched state to which most of the Moorish inhabitants in this part of India have been reduced, by the late rapid decline of the Mussulman Power. The conquest of Mysore, the cession of the Ceded Districts by his Highness the Nizam, and, lastly, the cession of the Carnatic, are events which, however much they may have contributed to the general prosperity of the Country, and the happiness of the greatest part of its population, have necessarily injured and depressed the hopes and fortunes of numerous persons who lived under the influence of the Mussulman Governments, and who must naturally look to the improvement of their condition by any change.

218. There was no longer a question about the Orders which had been found objectionable. The moment when they had been found in fact to be so, the Orders had been rescinded, and every means had been taken to remove any anxiety which they might be supposed to have created in the minds of the Native Troops. The subject therefore had, in the state in which it then appeared, assumed a more extensive range.

219. We never ceased to hope that, as the discontent of the Army had apparently originated, in a material degree, in the Orders which had been found objectionable, the effects might in a proportionate degree cease with the cause from which they were supposed to have taken rise. But it was obvious that other causes were, at the time to which we allude, in active operation; and it was impossible to form any conclusive judgment of the extent of the effect which they might produce.

220. Several examples of Mutiny and Insubordination had already taken place; and we had reason to believe, from very strong testimony, that a large portion of the Native Cavalry, which was situated in the very centre of Mussulman intrigue, had imbibed the poison of disaffection, and would not hesitate to join any leader who might venture to erect the standard of revolt. We encouraged every hope that a perseverance in those measures of prudence and precaution which we did not fail to adopt, would be successful in averting so serious a mischief; but we felt no certainty whether the storm which was thus evidently impending might dissipate, or where it might next descend; and in that state of things we should, in our apprehension, not have been faithful in the discharge of our duty, if we had blindly committed

ourselves to possible contingencies, which might be governed by innumerable secret springs of action, of which there were no means at that moment of accurately judging.

221. We did not apprehend that any intrigue would be successful to the extent of producing a general alienation of the affections of our Native Army. Such an extreme state of things would have been contrary to all former experience, and we saw no cause for the anticipation of it. We however feared that the disaffection which had already shown itself might extend to other Corps; and if we had not the means of checking the evil, that it might acquire accumulated force, and gain strength by the progress of example.

222. All cause of dissatisfaction had been carefully removed. If, therefore, such an event had occurred, it could only have proceeded from the most treasonable intentions, fostered by the influence and intrigues of persons who from their situation were placed in natural enmity to the British Government; and in such a case, it would certainly not have appeared to us, that we could hope to avert the evil by shutting our eyes to the view of it, or that it could be met with the expectation of success in any other mode, than by the exertion of the utmost determination and vigour.

223. In this country, above all others, we believe that the most salutary effects may be produced by measures of energy and promptitude. Of that fact a signal example had been exhibited in the recent events at Vellore; and we are led to think that a similar mode of proceeding could rarely fail, under similar circumstances, of the like success, for numberless instances afforded by the history of this Country justify the conclusion.

224. One of the chief difficulties which we experienced at that period was from the want of European Troops. The deficiency of the European part of our Establishment had been so frequently represented in the Dispatches of this Government, that the subject does not at present require particular explanation. We shall only observe, that at this time, notwithstanding the large extension of our territorial acquisitions, the strength of our European Military Force is less, more than by 2000 men, than it was in the year 1800.

225. It has been an invariable principle in the administration of the affairs of this Country, that our European Force should bear an adequate proportion to the strength of our Native Army; and that a certain number of European Troops should be placed at the principal Military Stations throughout the Territories of the Company. We do not consider the measure to imply any particular want of confidence in the Native part of our Establishment; but, independently of the actual addition of strength which it affords, we deem it highly important, by aiding in the support of that ascendancy of the European Character which must be essential to the British Power in this Country.

226. At the time of the late agitation in our Army, the usual Complement of the European Force at some of the principal Stations under this Government was deficient in a degree which under any circumstances might be liable to be attended with much injury, and which at that crisis might have been productive of the worst consequences.

227. We had no apprehension that the whole of our Native Army would join in any general plan of revolt, but there was sufficient cause to think, that if further agitation should occur, we could not implicitly rely on the exertions of our Native Troops for the suppression of it. It was impossible to say which Corps might be well-affected or which otherwise, and if further exertion had become necessary, it might have been imposing on the fidelity of the best disposed too severe an order to require them to put forth their strength to punish the misconduct of their associates in arms.

228. On that ground we represented to the Supreme Government, "that our confidence in our Native Army was for the present deeply shaken, and that it would be indispensable that we should place our chief reliance on the European part of our Military Establishment, if further measures of compulsion should be found necessary."

229. Under the favour of Providence a different result has happily followed. Those appearances which at one time threatened in various parts of the Country the serious disturbance of the public tranquillity have happily ceased. Those persons who had sought to avail themselves of the discord of one part of our Army have been baffled in their hopes, and every

circumstance indicates such a renewal of those ties of union and confidence as will speedily obliterate every painful recollection.

230. We trust however that it will not be inferred from this state of things, that we were imprudent or premature in any part of our communications with the Supreme Government. We have sufficiently shewn, that nothing could be more distant from our ideas, nothing that we more studiously guarded against, than a contest regarding points of opinion. The grounds of such a contest no longer existed; and if further measures of compulsion had been required, it would only have been in defence of the foundations of our Empire, in opposition to the designs of a hostile power, which would in the nature of things have acquired strength, activity, and confidence, in proportion as we should have shewn ourselves disposed to shrink from the danger, or unprepared to encounter and suppress it.

231. It will be observed, that we exerted the utmost care, while we were taking such precautions as our public duty apparently demanded, to avoid all indications of alarm. We had proclaimed to the Army our belief, that the disaffection did not extend beyond the limits of the Garrison of Vellore, before we received intelligence of an opposite nature; and we gave no cause to suppose that we had been led to entertain a less favourable impression, but continued steadily to pursue the course which appeared best calculated to allay the spirit of rancour, which the most inflammatory arts had been successful in exciting.

232. In laying before the Supreme Government a view of the facts which came to our knowledge, and in submitting an application on the subject of Troops, we observed the most cautious secrecy. It is not now necessary to go into a further explanation of the causes which produced the state of public feeling that those excited. It is sufficient to know that the circumstances which had been produced inclosed consequences of the greatest danger, and it was necessary that our conduct should be at once regulated by the utmost circumspection and energy.

233. We always entertained a sanguine hope that the difficulty would pass over without any further bad effect, but in the government of human affairs the idea of precaution would be banished, if probable evil were not foreseen, and seasonable measures adopted for the prevention of them. By that principle we were guided in our application to the Honourable the Governor General in Council respecting the augmentation of our Military Force. Having stated that application, it rested with the Supreme Government, in weighing the circumstances of the question, to comply with the suggestion or otherwise, as might in its wisdom be deemed proper; but on a careful revision of the facts which we have described we cannot depart from the opinion, that the application was in itself founded on the strongest grounds of public expediency and policy.

(v)

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL,
29 NOV. 1806.

THE first point is an explanation of the grounds on which your Lordship in Council recommended the measure of dispatching from Bengal a reinforcement of Troops to that Presidency, with reference to the sentiments expressed on that subject in our Dispatches of the 11th and 23d of August.

We have great satisfaction in expressing our entire concurrence in the justice of the statement contained in your Lordship's Address to the Secret Committee, respecting your solicitude to avoid the adoption of measures, founded on a disposition to oppose the Religious Tenets, Opinions, and Prejudices of the Native Troops, and calculated to promote distrust between the European and Native Branches of the Army. Your Lordship in Council has apparently misunderstood the motives which induced us to decline a compliance with your appli-

ation for a reinforcement of European Troops, and has supposed that we were influenced by an apprehension that your application proceeded from a design to employ the European Force in a contest with the Native Troops, on a question involving the Tenets of their Religious Faith. We request your Lordship to be assured, that such a design was never imputed to the Government of Fort St. George. We merely intimated that such an impression might be produced on the minds of the Sepoys; that the augmentation of the European Force at that particular period of time would have the appearance of a design to coerce and over-awe the Native Troops, that it would be a manifest indication that the Government had lost its confidence in their attachment; that it would render the European and Native Force adverse parties, and might have the effect of rendering the cause of the Sepoys (in their opinion) the cause of Religion. We understood the motives which induced your Lordship in Council to apply for a reinforcement of European Troops, to be such as you have described them in your Dispatch to the Secret Committee, but, being satisfied that the insurrection at Vellore could not justly be ascribed to the prevalence of a general sentiment of disaffection among the Native Troops, we could not concur in the necessity of a measure calculated, in our decided opinion, to produce the evils above described. Upon these grounds, as well as upon the ground of various of the objections which were stated in the Governor General's Minute of the 11th of August, and under a conviction that the removal of the cause which in our judgment had led to the Mutiny at Vellore, would restore confidence and good order; we declined a compliance with your Lordship in Council's application for a reinforcement of European Troops.

(w)

MINUTE OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT

Fort St. George, Sept. 11, 1806.

I THINK the erasure of the 1st and 23d Regiments from the Army List is not in itself either an essential or a necessary part of the example which is to be given to the Army. The Reduction of the Native Officers, and the entire re-organization of the Corps, constitute the essence of the punishment and of the example. The erasure of the Numbers of the Regiments would serve only to heighten the colouring. The fullness of the effect will be complete without this addition, which may be productive of future bad consequences.

The disadvantage which I foresee consists in the manner in which the Sepoys may reason upon late events. Of the public opinion we are not exactly informed, and, if we were, we should not be able to controul it. We have reason to believe that the greater part of the Army have felt more or less dissatisfaction; and that the invasion of their prejudices has constituted the principal ground of this dissatisfaction. Are we sure that the Sepoys will be ever divested of the opinion, that the Orders respecting the Turband, and other parts of Dress, were contrary to Cast? It seems hardly possible that they ever should. and if so, is it good policy to permit to exist for ever a striking subject of enquiry and curiosity? To which the answer may be, "The English invaded the prejudices of the Sepoys, and wished to make Christians of them. The Sepoys resolved to die, rather than submit. A massacre ensued. The officers and men were hanged and transported, and the Numbers of the Regiments erased from the Army List." Why should we give to our enemies, most ingenious in every art of seduction, this standing argument to corrupt the Sepoy mind? Why should we keep alive by artificial means the everlasting memory of this event?

The Commander in Chief is perfectly right in his recommendation of this measure. It is in perfect consistency with his opinion of the causes of those events; and punishment and example with those ideas cannot be carried too far.

But this Council and the Supreme Government entertain different sentiments. We are of opinion that the sensation cannot too soon subside, that the necessary examples cannot too soon be made, and the whole transaction too soon be forgotten. I am so convinced of the consequence of acting with uniformity, and without deviation from those principles, that I must take upon myself to reject, upon my own authority, this proposition.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

(x)

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL
TO THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL OF FORT ST. GEORGE.

THE next and most important points to which your Lordship in Council has attracted our attention are, the disposal of the numerous persons who were concerned in the Mutiny at Vellore, your decision regarding the two Native Battalions which were doing duty at that place at the period of the Mutiny, and the proposed measure of expunging from the List of the Army the Names of the Regiments to which those Battalions were attached.

On a consideration of all the circumstances connected with the Mutiny at Vellore, we are compelled to state our opinion, that the Regiments to which those Battalions were attached should have been struck out of the List of the Army; and all the Native Officers and Men not in confinement should have been discharged the service, excepting those Officers and Men who, being absent at the period of the Mutiny, are considered to be free from guilt, or who, being present, took an active part on the side of Duty. That those who had been absent should have been drafted into other Corps; and those who actively supported their Officers should also have been removed to other Corps, and promoted.

The measure of expunging the two Regiments from the List of the Army, and discharging the Officers and Men as above described, appears to us to be advisable in two points of view: first, as it tends to maintain in the Army a due sense of Military honour, by permanently stigmatizing Corps which had thus disgraced the Military profession; and, secondly, as a salutary example and a warning to those who on any future occasion might be unwilling to disclose their knowledge of existing machinations and intrigues, although resolved to take no part in them, by indicating that the mere Concealment of intended Treachery is a breach of Duty in a Soldier, and will expose him to the punishment of a disgraceful discharge from the Service. This opinion also is consistent with the general sentiments of Military men, whose judgment in questions of this nature is certainly entitled to peculiar consideration.

We deem it therefore extremely advisable this course of proceeding should still be adopted, unless, under the determination of your Lordship in Council to preserve on the List of the Army the 1st and 23d Regiments, and to retain in the service all the men belonging to the Regiments now doing duty, the Government of Fort St. George should have so far pledged itself by subsequent measures to carry that determination into effect as to render it impossible to reverse it. If it should be practicable to adopt the measure now proposed, registers of the names and descriptions of the persons of all who may be discharged the service, should be sent to all the Army Stations, with a view to prevent their being again enlisted.

We cannot entertain the opinion that the discharge of these men will constitute a source of danger. The observations stated by the Right Honourable Lord William Bentinck, in his Minute of the 13th September, upon the question of discharging the men at present in confinement, may be considered descriptive of whatever danger could be apprehended from the whole class of men whose discharge we have provisionally recommended. It appears to us that the systematic employment of these men, in disseminating sentiments of revolt and disgust, is by no means a necessary consequence of their discharge from the service; nor are we

disposed to attribute any serious effect to their intrigues, supposing them even so employed. In fact, our security against revolt and disaffection must depend not on the means of preventing the efforts of intrigue, which no degree of vigilance and precaution can effectually preclude, if by intrigue the turbulent and seditious can hope to gain their ends; but on the preservation of those bonds of connection by which the interests of the People and the Army are identified with the interests of the State. If, by the intervention of any predisposing causes, the People and the Army are susceptible of seduction, numerous instruments of intrigue will ever be found, and that source of danger will be equally active and extensive, although the men in question should not be discharged. Moreover, in general it may be asserted, men who are in possession of the peculiar benefits of the Military Service will not easily be induced to disregard them, by the persuasion of those who are reduced to distress by the just forfeiture of those benefits. It is rather to be expected, that the distress of their condition will prove a warning to others.

The apprehension of danger from such a source must have its origin in a distrust of the fidelity of the Native Troops. The prevalence of that distrust is itself a source of considerable danger. Since it naturally promotes the apprehended evil, it must speedily become reciprocal between the Native Troops and their Officers, and the bonds of connection between the State and its Native Army are thus liable to be weakened. We discern no just foundation for such distrust on the part of the European Officers; and it is evidently of the highest importance to arrest the progress of such a sentiment. We deem it our duty therefore earnestly to recommend this point to the special attention of your Lordship in Council. We entertain no doubt that the means by which the attachment of the Native Army has been established will ever be sufficient to preserve it. That a proper attention to the comfort and happiness of the Native Troops, combined with unabated confidence, with the maintenance of due subordination and Military Discipline, with the prompt and exemplary punishment of misconduct and the reward of merit, will preserve throughout the Army the fidelity, attachment, and efficiency, by which it has in general been distinguished.

We shall conclude this branch of the subject by stating our decided opinion, that none of the extensive evils described in Lord William Bentinck's Minute, above referred to, as liable to flow from the discharge of the men, are within the compass of their power to produce, even supposing, which we consider to be far from probable, that they should generally engage in the prosecution of intrigues, or industriously endeavour to disseminate principles adverse to the interest of the State.

Fort William, November 29, 1806.

(y)

THE PRESIDENT RECORDS THE FOLLOWING MINUTE.

Fort St. George, August 20, 1806.

I BEG leave to state in writing the reasons which appear to me to oppose the suggestion to embark the Princes at Sadras, and which I gave verbally in Council.

In the first place, I see no reason to fear any open attempt at the Presidency to rescue the Princes. I have never heard that they had any connection with the Presidency; and it is probable that the Moormen here are for the most part the followers and adherents of the Carnatic Family, and would be rather hostile than otherwise to the establishment of a Government under one of the Sons of Tippoo Sultan. In the second place, if there was any real ground of danger, it would be bad policy in my opinion not to look it fully in the face. The great care in all our proceedings should be, not to demonstrate any sign of fear or apprehension of the stability of our power. For this reason I was originally against the removal of the Princes, and taking any measure until the Commission had made their report. I was

afterwards reluctantly compelled, by the strong evidence which was produced, to depart from this resolution. And I am now sorry, as this might have been avoided, that it was done.

But in the present case, should any attempt at a rescue be formed, the strength of the Escort will be fully adequate to resist it. But if that spirit of animosity exists to an extent likely to produce a degree of boldness of action unknown in this country, we have as much to fear from it in the absence as in the presence of the Princes. If the spirit of the people is really worked up to that pitch, the pretext would be immaterial, insurrection might be justly dreaded. In this case the presence of the Escort would be indispensable, and the division of it our ruin.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

(2)

MINUTE OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT.

Fort St. George, September 13, 1806.

THE expected Report of Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes, which might class the Vellore prisoners according to their several degrees of guilt, is now laid before the Board by the Commander in Chief. A similar Report has been transmitted by Colonel Campbell from Trichinopoly with the Mutineers who have been taken up in the Southern provinces. Upon the former of these Reports the Government had entertained the hope of being enabled to pass a conclusive and satisfactory decision upon the general case of the Mutineers.

Unfortunately these Reports have relieved us from no part of our embarrassment. Lieutenant-Colonel Forbes states, that it is impossible to sort the several classes, or to make any distribution in estimating the guilt of the general mass. Colonel Campbell has given the same opinion. This Officer has no doubt of their being deeply implicated, and of many of them having been principals; but he says, there is not evidence sufficient to convict them before a Court Martial. Thus all our hopes of finding out the guilty, and of granting mercy and forgiveness, and of reducing this heavy list of criminals, have been completely disappointed. It now remains for us to determine upon the disposal of these six hundred prisoners.

There appears to me to be three courses to follow.

1. "To punish with Death the most guilty, who can be convicted by a Court Martial, and to transport the general mass"
2. "To punish the most guilty with Death, and to grant an Amnesty to the rest."
3. "To punish with Death the most guilty, and to keep the remainder in Confinement."

I shall examine each proposition separately.

With regard to the first, or measure of general Transportation, it would be dangerous in policy and objectionable in justice. It is true that the greatest possible outrage against discipline, allegiance, humanity, and every feeling of a man or a soldier, has been committed by these prisoners. The crime cannot be exceeded; but the origin of the feelings which led to the commission of these crimes must never be lost sight of by this Government in the measures to be taken. We have to consider the effect that our conduct may have upon future times. The nice and delicate part of our proceedings is to impress the minds of the Army with the opinion that we are punishing Murder rather than the Resistance to Orders, which were inconsistent with their most sacred ordinances, and which we have admitted to be so: That we are vindicating the Law and Justice, rather than gratifying Revenge. To convey these impressions, we must take care to avoid all appearance of too much severity, all suspicion of injustice.

The examples must be such, so strikingly necessary, so positively just, that no man can cast a doubt upon them. The punishment with Death of all the Native Officers, and of all actual perpetrators of murder, would receive this acknowledgment. The punishment by due course of Law in the Civil Courts, of all men found with plunder, would have the same effect. But to go further, and to punish the great mass, not found in arms, as I at first supposed, but taken up in the several provinces, with Transportation, a more severe punishment than death itself, would, I think, have very bad effects. Let us recollect who are the judges of our actions, and whose conduct by our actions we hope to control. It is the Army, that Army who have, by far the great majority, been more or less agitated by the same feelings. The horror and detestation which they would feel at any other time against the acts of these Mutineers, will be softened by the sympathy which men originally engaged in the same cause, must entertain for each other. It will appear to the great mass the cause of the Turband, the cause of their Cast and Religion. This has been the excuse set up by almost all the prisoners who have been examined. It is the best pretext for such conduct, and the pretext that the actually guilty will always give, and the rest of the Army will always give credit to. We have reason to know that the general sentiment among all descriptions of people in our own territories has been, that we meant to convert by force the Sepoys to Christianity; and my opinion is, that a punishment of extraordinary severity, as would be the Exile of 600 persons without trial, might excite compassion, might revolt the general sentiments of the Army, and would tend to alienate rather than to recal their affections.

In respect to the justice of general Transportation, some doubt would also occur. There must necessarily be various degrees of guilt. It is hardly possible that all should have known it. Some of the Native Officers, upon the best evidence, were wholly uninformed of the Conspiracy. Many Privates must have been equally ignorant. There might have been a general feeling of discontent, and a general expression of it, without any fixed and determined object and plan. There were some instances of very great kindness on the part of the Sepoys to save the lives of Europeans. Many must have been, no doubt, solely engaged by plunder: this probably was the object of the greater part. But in fact this mob was like all other mobs: the passions were inflamed, and a few wicked characters gave them the direction of their own abominable wickedness. But malice prepense cannot be supposed to have generally existed. To the eye of the Law all these men would be equally guilty, but in the eye of Equity, viewing the outrage offered to all, the improbability of general fore-knowledge of the intentions of the principals, the possibility of many, without any participation in crime, having fled through fear, certainly the degrees of moral guilt are various, and a sentence of general Transportation would be unjust. The numbers that have already suffered must not wholly be excluded, when calculating the effects of punishment.

2dly. To grant a general Amnesty to the mass.

This plan of proceeding would evidently be the most desirable, if it could be adopted with safety, if the Mutineers had put any sort of measure to their violence, if they had confined their resentment to any particular Officers by whom they might have been ill used; or if they had treated with disrespect alone, however great, their Officers, pardon might be granted to them. But when the excessive atrocity of the crime, extending to the Murder of all European Officers, and to the erection of the Standard of a Foreign Power, is considered, hasty forgiveness would be unintelligible to people accustomed till very lately to all the rigour of Asiatic despotism. At no time would it be safe to turn adrift so many hundred men bred up to arms, unaccustomed and unable to obtain subsistence by any other honest means. But in the present moment their liberty might be greatly injurious to the service, while the late transactions are still fresh in the minds of the people. Hatred to a service from which they are deprived of the benefit they have long enjoyed, might induce them to spread in every part of the country a disgust which might impede the Recruiting service. Living in poverty and distress, they might perhaps communicate with other parts of the Army, and keep alive the dissatisfaction which all our endeavours are directed to allay.

3dly. To keep the general mass in Confinement.

The principal objections which I have opposed to general Transportation, as well as to a general Amnesty, will be obviated by this third course. The Government will be equally free from the charge of too much severity, or of too much lenity. Time will best determine the conduct that it may be both just and politic to pursue with regard to these prisoners.

The punishment that immediately followed the crime, and the examples that will be made under the sentence of the Native Court Martial, will complete all the effect that may be hoped from severity of punishment. I cannot say that the time for mercy and lenity is arrived. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the state of the opinion of the Army so to decide. As long as any disposition exists to throw off allegiance, lenity may be taken for weakness. Lenity may hasten returning fidelity, but must not be depended on for creating it in a disaffected soldiery. Until we see our own way more clearly, we had better suspend our opinions. We had better confine ourselves to conduct, the effects of which cannot be doubted. Confinement leaves the Government at liberty as to the measures to be hereafter taken. If we should find that the revocation of the Orders is not sufficient, that disaffection still continues, and that a system of greater coercion is necessary, we can pass the sentence of Transportation.

If on the other hand the sensation shall completely subside, as there is every appearance of its doing, the prisoners may be partially or wholly released, as further enquiry into their actual criminality, or the sincere repentance of their misconduct, may make safe and expedient. There is no danger in this course. No man can consider it unjust to confine persons implicated in Murder and Rebellion.

I therefore recommend that the present General Court Martial shall be dissolved as soon as the Trials of the Prisoners against whom there has been evidence, shall be concluded.

I am of opinion that those of the Mutineers, not Commissioned or Non-commissioned Officers, and not guilty of any particular act of atrocity, who may have been convicted, should not be executed.

I recommend that all the Prisoners be confined in fortresses having European garrisons. The greater number could, I imagine, be safely lodged in Vellore or Fort St. George. I am of opinion that, as evidence may be procurable against actual perpetrators of Murder, a Native General Court Martial should again assemble. Those Prisoners found with plunder upon them should be committed to take their trial before the Court of Circuit.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

(a a)

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD W. BENTINCK,
GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL, FORT ST. GEORGE.

MY LORD,

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship in Council's dispatch under date the 14th *ultimo*, containing your report of the late appearance of disaffection in the 2d Battalion 18th Regiment, stationed partly at Bangalore, and partly at Nundydroog.

2. We are extremely concerned at the tenor of this intelligence, which clearly demonstrates the actual formation of a plot for the destruction of the European Officers at Nundydroog, and affords just ground to believe that a disposition existed among the Native Troops

at Bangalore, similar to that which was manifested by the Corps in Garrison at the former station.

3. From the communication contained in your Lordship in Council's dispatch, we are apprized of the following material facts

First. That the 2d Battalion 18th Regiment was raised in Mysore, and is composed of men formerly in the Military Service of Tippoo Sultan, and actually in arms against us.

Secondly. That the promulgation of the General Orders respecting the new Turband produced the same discontent in that Battalion as that which they occasioned in other Corps of the Army.

Thirdly. That some adventurers endeavoured to promote disaffection among the Officers and Men of that Battalion.

4. From these facts, and from the information contained in your Lordship in Council's Dispatch, we deduce the following conclusion.

First. That a latent and distinct source of disaffection existed in the 2d Battalion 18th Regiment, originating in the peculiar description of men who composed it.

Secondly. That this pre-existing source of disaffection rendered the Men of the Battalion peculiarly susceptible of the influence of malicious intrigues and insinuations, and probably suggested the attempts which have been made to induce them to revolt.

Thirdly. That these causes of disaffection are sufficient to account for its continuance after the abrogation of the Orders which had excited a spirit of discontent.

5. Admitting the accuracy of the Evidence of Cuttory and others, with regard to dates, there is certainly some reason to suspect that, previously to the promulgation of the Orders respecting the new Turband, persons in the character of mendicants, or adventurers, entertained the design of endeavouring to excite a spirit of disaffection among the Troops stationed at Bangalore and Nundydroog. Such a project might (as we have before observed) easily have been suggested by a consideration of the description of Troops composing the Battalion divided between those Stations; and, with reference to the existing number of partizans of the late Government of Mysore, the condition of that Country might have been thought more favourable to the purposes of insurrection than any other. The nature of the exhibition also, particularly adverted to on the evidence of Cuttory and Abdul Cawder, was exclusively adapted to the notions of men, who, having formerly been in the service of Tippoo Sultan, might have been in the habit of considering the cause of Tippoo Sultan and of the French to be one. Hence we infer that these projects of seduction, supposing them actually to have existed antecedently to the promulgation of the Orders respecting the Turband, were of a local nature, and entirely unconnected with a general systematic plan, entertained or pursued by any State or States, or by that class or description of persons constituting what may be deemed the Mussulman Interest, to alienate the attachment of the Native Army. But from the evidence above referred to, it appears that even though the plan of this inflammatory exhibition might have been suggested previously to the promulgation of the Orders respecting the Turband, it was not called into activity until after those Orders had been published. Cuttory states as follows. "After these Facquiers had been here about a month, without shewing their puppets, the Subidars and Jemidars consulted in the Barracks, and agreed to send for them to exhibit; but it was also agreed that it was necessary to keep the whole secret, and an Oath was proposed, but having no Koran they only went through the ceremony by touching their swords and mouths." — According to this evidence, the circumstances of their seeing the exhibition and taking the oath were coincident in point of time; but, by the evidence of Abdul Cawder, it appears that the oath was taken after the promulgation of the Orders respecting the Turband, as he states that the oaths were taken before the Order doing away the new Turband. The proceedings of the Subidars and Jemidars as above described, therefore, may be referred to a date subsequent to the promulgation of the Orders respecting the Turband. This inference is further confirmed by the date assigned by Cuttory to the exhibition, which took place, by his account, a month after the arrival of the Facquiers, that is, in the month of April. We are not apprized of the time when those Orders reached Nundydroog; but it may be inferred that it was in the month of

April, since the commotion in the 2d Battalion 4th Regiment at Vellore, occasioned by those Orders, occurred on the 6th and 7th May.

6. We have judged it proper to investigate particularly this point of evidence, because it appears principally to have suggested the supposition that a general and systematic project of seduction had been entertained, and pursued with success, independently of the discontents occasioned by the Orders respecting the new Turband. For this conclusion we discern no solid grounds in the communications contained in your Lordship in Council's Dispatch. But we have observed, on a former occasion, that in all quarters of India, numbers will ever be found prepared to take advantage of any state of circumstances favourable to the objects of commotion and disorder; and to that active principle we ascribe the insidious attempts which appear to have been made in Mysore to promote the disaffection of the Native Troops.

7. Although, under the agitation occasioned by the late events at Vellore, Hydrabad, and Nundydroog, and after the examples thus afforded of actual disaffection among some Corps of the Native Army, it is possible that further efforts may still be made to seduce the minds of the Sepoys; we entertain a full confidence, that, every cause of discontent having now been removed, such endeavours will produce no effect, and that complete reliance may be reposed in the fidelity and attachment of the general body of the Native Troops.

8. At the same time we entirely concur in the opinion of your Lordship in Council, that the prompt and vigorous exercise of the public authority, directed to the purpose of affording a just and salutary example of severity, is necessary on the present occasion to preclude the recurrence of similar disorders; and we infer with satisfaction, from the tenor of your Lordship in Council's Dispatch, that it is your intention to adopt this firm and vigorous course of proceeding.

9. We are unwilling to embarrass the operation of your Lordship in Council's authority, by prescribing, on the present occasion, the adoption of specific measures; we deem it our duty, however, to express our opinion, that not only the persons whose active guilt can be fully established should suffer the severest punishment, but that the remaining part of the Battalion should be discharged with disgrace, making exceptions of course in favour of those who have manifested their fidelity.

10. We deem it proper also to recommend that, in future, great caution should be observed in the selection of Recruits, and that no person known to have been formerly in the service of Tippoo Sultan should be admitted into the service of the British Government. We even recommend to your Lordship in Council's consideration, whether it may not be expedient to avoid all recruiting in Mysore, and, as far as it may be practicable, to adopt it as a rule to raise and recruit the Native Corps in the territories subject to your immediate government, and, if possible, in those territories which have been longest under the government of the Company.

11. It is farther our duty to desire, that no measure affecting the constitution and condition of the Native Army may be adopted: the mere agitation, indeed, of such measures, in the actual state of affairs, may constitute a source of evil.

12. We also request that your Lordship in Council will transmit to us instant information of any occurrence, at whatever stage of your information, in any manner connected with the late events.

13. It is superfluous to express our earnest recommendation, that the utmost promptitude and vigour may govern the proceedings of your Lordship in Council on all such occasions.

We have the honour to be,
&c. &c. &c.

(Signed)

G. H. BARLOW.
LAKE.
G. UDNY.

Fort William, Dec. 4, 1806.

(b b)

EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL.

WITH respect to the persons in confinement, we are of opinion, on a review of all the circumstances of the case, that, for the benefit of example, a measure of severity is urgently required. We are aware of the objections which have been opposed to it, founded on the different degrees of guilt amongst the persons thus to be rendered objects of the same degree of punishment, and on the approximation of the actual guilt of those who are now at liberty, and permitted to do duty, to the guilt of the prisoners. But in all cases of extensive Mutiny or Rebellion, the operations of justice must necessarily be defective: the strict principles of distributive justice are equally violated by suffering any of the guilty to escape, as by involving in the same punishment different degrees of guilt. In such cases, the object of public safety, as connected with a measure of exemplary severity, would be defeated, if the operation of the latter were to be impeded by the necessity of discriminating the innumerable shades and varieties of individual guilt. That object is promoted by subjecting to signal penalty all participators in the general crime whom, at the period of commotion, the hand of authority can reach. The principles of military discipline urgently require the adoption of a course of proceeding calculated by its severity to inspire awe, and to arrest the progress of contagion. It is rendered still more necessary by the late conduct of the Troops at Nundydroog, respecting which we have just received the communications of your Lordship in Council. Considered in this point of view, the exemplary punishment of the general mass of the prisoners concerned in the Mutiny at Vellore is a measure of State necessity, involving the very security of the British Dominions in India, and consequently superseding that degree of regard to the regular forms of Law, and the strict principles of distributive justice, which would necessarily preclude the benefit of a salutary exertion or vigour, energy, and firmness.

The indiscriminate punishment of all who may have been seized in the act of Mutiny, or known to have been engaged in it, without entering into a consideration of the guilt of those who may have escaped, or may have been included in a general amnesty, is peculiarly calculated to deter others from joining in Riots or Mutinies. In all cases of such extensive commotion a limit must be imposed to the cognizance of individual offences. Punishment may justly be inflicted on those whom the hand of justice has overtaken, although others equally guilty may fortuitously have escaped notice. By permitting men of the latter description to resume their military duties, the Government has precluded itself from inflicting upon them the punishment which may be awarded to the former, who, with reference to the urgent necessity of affording a signal example of severity, should in our decided judgment be selected for that purpose as principals in the atrocious crimes of Mutiny and Murder.

Under this view of the subject, which we consider to be incontrovertibly just, we concur in the expediency of the measure suggested in the Council of Fort St George, of consigning to banishment all amongst the persons now in confinement who shall not be able satisfactorily to prove that they were active in repressing the progress of the Mutiny, or were absent from Vellore at the period of its occurrence. We recommend this measure, therefore, not from any apprehension of the intrigues and machinations of the persons now in confinement, if immediately or gradually discharged, or of the possible effects of detaining them in the Country in a state of restraint, but from our conviction of the necessity of producing a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of the Army and the inhabitants of the Country, by a severe example of the just resentment of Government among the atrocious perpetrators of the massacre of Vellore.

The greater number of these men might be transported to the Cape, the remainder, in proportions, to Prince of Wales's Island, Bencoolen, and Malacca. Thus divided, their

number at each Colony cannot be a subject of apprehension. At those places they should be kept in strict confinement, but not like convicts, transported under a sentence of the Civil Law, condemned to hard labour. The act of their transportation from their Native Territories is that which will produce the desired impression upon the minds of others. The additional severity of condemning them to labour appears to be unnecessary; their fate, in a condition of exile, will be unknown to the body of the people. Their removal from their Country and connections will complete the measures of requisite severity, and consequently of requisite example. We accordingly request that your Lordship in Council will adopt the necessary measures for carrying this arrangement into effect with the least practicable delay; much of its impression will depend upon the promptitude of its execution.

(c c)

TO MAJOR-GENERAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS MAITLAND,
&c. &c. &c.

HONOURABLE SIR,

BY a miraculous effort we have discovered and quelled a Mutiny at this place. An express has been sent off to *Trichinopoly*, but from the nature of a plot understood to be in great forwardness all over the Coast, we think it absolutely necessary to apply to you for immediate succour by *Tutacoryn*. A few Companies of Europeans for a rallying point, at this period, may prove the means of saving the Company's Territories all over the Coast (there are no Europeans South of *Trichinopoly*, and four Native Corps very thinly Officered). We have now quiet possession of the Arms of the Battalion, having turned out 450 Moormen, and confined 20 Native Officers. It may be necessary to inform you briefly that all *Mussulmen* are concerned in this plot, and that this district abounds in them. A European succour alone can complete the work which under Providence we have so fortunately begun.

We are in all about 20 souls to depend on one another, after collecting Civilians, Officers, and Private Europeans, and half Casts together. We will sell our lives most dearly before any force shall conquer us. We have four Ladies in the house with us, and have armed 4 or 500 men whom we hope we may rely on. Col. Dyce commands this district, if *alive*, and will be here to-morrow. We keep possession of this Fort, but rely only on our *Citadel*, a large *House*.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

(Signed)

J. WELSH,
Major Commanding 1st Battalion
3d Regiment, and Palamcottah.

(d d)

PROPOSED CIRCULAR LETTER TO OFFICERS COMMANDING CORPS.

(Confidential.)

December 2d, 1806.

SIR,

I AM directed by the Commander in Chief to call your attention to a subject of the utmost importance to the public service, which appears, in many instances of recent occurrence, not to have been sufficiently impressed on the minds of the European Officers of this Army

His Excellency alludes to the practice, originating probably from a recent unfortunate event, of too readily entertaining suspicions of the fidelity of the Troops, of seeking, with indiscreet enquiry, for grounds of such suspicion, marking in conversation, and in conduct, an apprehension and belief of latent treachery, admitting vague rumours, and the reports of ignorant, timid, or malicious persons, as presumptive, if not positive evidence of plots and intentions which have frequently no shadow of existence but in the alarms of the reporters.

Such conduct in *Officers* cannot fail to excite in the minds of the Troops those ideas of which they see themselves *suspected*, and the dread of imaginary treason, so publicly displayed, may thus encourage sentiments, which under other circumstances would not have been entertained.

If those evil designs which have of late been so frequently imputed to the Native Troops had actual existence, and if the bravest and most military class of our Native Army were actually tainted with disaffection, still every consideration of policy would concur in prescribing to European Officers the imperious duty of concealing their belief that such was the case, and acting as if influenced by a degree of confidence they did not possess: this conduct then is still more necessary when vague suspicions alone exist. No information should be neglected, no endeavours should be omitted to obtain an accurate knowledge of the habits, conduct, and connexions of the Troops; but this knowledge should be sought with discretion and secrecy, well weighed when obtained, and acted on, if *necessary only*, without precipitation.

The Commander in Chief desires me to convey to you his Orders, that you severally communicate to all your European Officers these his sentiments; that you caution them particularly to avoid in society all discussion on the events or suspicions in question, as such discussions, when overheard and repeated, produce most extensive mischief. And he expects from you and from them that firmness of conduct, which, while it avoids to shew suspicion, is prepared to meet with manliness any event which may occur, and to exert the energy of discipline for the preservation of order and subordination.

This communication, though *official*, is entirely confidential to you, and to your European Officers. It is not to be recorded in your books, but his Excellency hopes you will impress it on your minds, and expects that it shall influence your conduct.

(Signed)

P. A. AGNEW,
Adjutant-General.

(e e)

PRESIDENT'S MINUTE

UPON the Proceedings of the Court Martial held at the request of Government upon Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Major Welsh, it will be only sufficient for me to express my concern at finding that the sentiments and feelings of that Court are apparently at entire variance with those of this and of the Supreme Government, as well upon matters of fact as upon questions of policy, in our minds of the utmost consequence. Although I cannot approve either the Proceedings or Sentence of the Court, it is unnecessary for me to offer any comments upon them. The Trials are over. The only thing for Government to consider is, whether the issue of them is likely to be attended with any ill effects, and whether those effects admit of a remedy.

The circumstances which led to these Trials are still fresh in our memory. The acts of both these Officers appeared to be pregnant with the greatest political mischief. Major Welsh, *according to the opinion of Government*, had, without reason, publicly declared by the most marked act his distrust of the Mussulmen—Lieutenant-Colonel Grant, on the other hand, professing to have no reason for his suspicion, marked his distrust to the whole body of Native Troops under his command—of the two acts the latter was undoubtedly calculated to produce the lesser injury. It was a general insult. The Moorman was not more degraded than the Hindoo; and the greater danger that was apprehended from the alienation of the former, was at least not increased by the unfortunate distinction manifested at Palamcottah. The Government, aware of the fatal tendency of such want of confidence, immediately directed the restoration to the Sepoys, both Mussulmen and Hindoos, of their arms, and both manifested and expressed undiminished reliance in their fidelity, they took instant means also of marking their displeasure with the authors of these transactions. These measures were approved by the Supreme Government; they were, and my conviction still remains the same, most just and politic. A Circular Letter was also confidentially addressed by the Commander to all the European Officers of the Army, full of the soundest advice, in regard to the danger of manifesting suspicion, whether well or ill grounded. From that time to the present we have pursued the same system of measures towards our Native Troops.

I have before expressed my opinion, that the greatest evil which we had to encounter was the general distrust prevailing among the European Officers of the Army. No fidelity, however staunch, can withstand the continuance of suspicion. I am sorry to believe that this impression has not yet diminished, the Sentence of this Court Martial, not qualified by the least consideration for the Native Troops, who were so ignominiously distrusted, strongly confirms, in my judgment, the operation of this feeling. Brought as the whole Political question has been before this Court, it would have been natural, nay, in such times, it became an evident obligation of public duty, to have gone, as far as justice could permit, in supporting the principle of confidence which, by the highest authorities in India, has been invariably and uniformly acted upon. However incompetent such a Court may be to the consideration of subjects of high Political importance, still the wisdom of the principle in question, and the impossibility of acting upon any other, without the manifest danger of destruction to our Empire, was too apparent to admit of doubt. The only possible inference that can now be drawn from the marked and unqualified terms of acquittal is this, that the Sepoys were justly distrusted and disarmed. If the Native Troops have any feeling upon these Courts Martial, they cannot think otherwise. I see in the Court Martial a conversation with a Native Officer alluded to, in which it is pretended that the Troops were not sensible of any dishonour done to them in this act. We know that every Native will say what is pleasing without consideration of truth. The sentiment ascribed is repugnant to reason and to human nature; every Soldier, in every service in the world, knows that he cannot be more dishonoured than by being deprived of his arms.

I confess it to be my decided opinion, that the result of these Trials is likely to have a very injurious tendency; they are calculated to encourage distrust on both sides, and to hold out an impression in regard to the Native Troops, which may be successfully taken advantage of by designing persons. I think the Government bound to counteract, by a publication of its sentiments, these possible effects. I am aware, at the same time, that in the terms of such a publication great delicacy is required. In regard to the two individuals in question, though I think they do not merit the marked exculpation given to them, yet I should be sorry to attempt to deprive them of any part of the benefit of such an acquittal. I am of opinion also, that any strong dissent from the opinion of the Court Martial would operate rather with bad than good effect upon the minds of the Army. It would be advisable rather to confirm the acquittal of the Court, and to approve their Sentences as regarding the Military Question before them. The Political part of the subject Government are at liberty to consider within their province alone, and to suppose that the Court did not consider these points within their jurisdiction. In the firm conviction of the mischief that may arise from the confirmation that these fatal opinions may receive from the decision of this Court Martial, it seems our bounden duty to declare explicitly to all Officers of the Company the opinions and principles which we conceive ought to regulate the conduct of all. It seems necessary to do this, if it were only for the purpose of declaring that such acts as have been done by Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Major Welsh are not considered meritorious. It is necessary to issue positive instructions upon this subject, in order that those who may be more influenced by a sense of personal danger than by a regard for the interests of the State, may have *in terrorem* the consequences of disobedience.

As I can better explain my sentiments by a draft of the proposed publication, it is now submitted, with my recommendation that it may be published in the General Orders of Government.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

Fort St. George, March 20, 1807.

G. O. BY GOVERNMENT.

THE Commander in Chief has laid before Government the Proceedings of the Court Martial held upon Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Major Welsh; and his Lordship in Council has seen with great satisfaction the honourable vindication which the opinion of the Court has afforded to the reputation of Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Major Welsh. His Lordship in Council is disposed entirely to concur in the purity of intention, and zeal for the public service, by which these Officers were actuated.

While the Court Martial has done justice to the Officers who have been arraigned before them, it is also the peculiar duty of his Lordship in Council, the guardian alike of the honour of all, of the Soldier as of the Sepoy, of the European as of the Native Officer, to express his deep concern that the effect both of Lieutenant-Colonel Grant's and Major Welsh's conduct must necessarily tend to the degradation and distrust of a large portion of a most loyal and faithful branch of our Army. His Lordship in Council, responsible for the public welfare, feels it his duty to make known to the Officers of the Army his decided opinion, that such acts are most injurious to the best interests of the State. To involve the innocent with the guilty, and include, in a sweeping implication of guilt, a numerous body of men, on the ground of general suspicion or apprehension, is a mode of proceeding which, on the immutable principles of justice, as well as on the soundest maxims of established policy, no just Government can tolerate, and which every wise Government must condemn. No fidelity, however staunch, can withstand such marked distrust. His Lordship in Council therefore, while, with the Court Martial, he gives full credit to the honourable motives of Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Major Welsh, cannot but deeply lament the impression which such acts must make upon the minds of the Native Troops.

To estimate the effects of such conduct to the interests of the British Empire is the peculiar province of the Governor in Council. The present occasion appears to demand from Government the declaration of these general principles, wise and salutary in themselves, and most impressively inculcated by the highest Authority in India, in the spirit of which his Lordship in Council requires the cordial co-operation of all the Military and Civil Servants of the Company.

By Order of the Right honourable the Governor in Council,

*Fort St. George,
March 20, 1807.*

(Signed)

GEORGE BUCHAN,
Chief Secretary to the Governor.

The Board having concurred in the doubt which is entertained regarding the accuracy of the grounds on which the Sentences of the Court Martial are founded, and having agreed in opinion with Lord William Bentinck regarding the propriety of making known the sentiments of Government, with respect to the conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Major Welsh, it is accordingly resolved that the proposed General Order be published.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF'S MINUTE.

I HAD intended to issue a General Order at the time of the publication of the Sentences of the General Court Martial upon Lieutenant-Colonel Grant and Major Welsh, which appeared to me correspondent with the sentiment of a Court selected with peculiar care from the highest ranks and the most approved experience, and in fact the simple consequence of their judgment, a Copy of which I submitted to Government.

The President expressed to me a wish, that I should not give out the Order, as it might embarrass the future operation of Government; which I thought it my duty to comply with, as His Lordship views these Trials as partaking perhaps more of a State than even a Military nature.

Under this impression, however I may be under the influence of notions peculiar to the effect of a Court Martial, yet I shall not dissent to any part of the present Order by Government, as His Lordship in Council conceives, that such a publication will be of advantage to the Interest of the State.

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieutenant General.

Madras, March 20th, 1807.

(ff)

The PRESIDENT lays before the Board the following MINUTE.

AS no opportunity will offer for many weeks of carrying into effect the Orders of the Supreme Government regarding the banishment of the men of the Battalions now in confinement, amounting to hundred persons, I feel myself called upon by a paramount sense of public duty, to state the reasons why I consider the measure to be impolitic, and hostile to the true interests of this Government.

The conduct of this Government in regard to the Mutiny at Vellore, and upon all the events growing out of it, has been regulated by one uniform system of Policy, from which it has never departed. The principles of this system were for the most part entirely approved by the Governor General in Council. The only difference of opinion consisted in the extent to which the principle should be carried, and in this respect the Supreme Government went further in the application of it, than was considered by this Government to be expedient. The late Dispatch of the Governor General in Council under date the 29th of November, has ordered a course of proceeding apparently in direct opposition to that which was recommended in the Dispatch of the Governor General in Council, particularly illustrated by the Governor General's Minute under date the 11th August. The opinion which I entertain, and am anxious to enforce, is, that the Instructions laid down in the Governor General's Minute of the 11th August, were the just and wise rule of proceeding; that the sentiments of the Governor General contain a true and comprehensive view of the circumstances of the Vellore Mutiny, that subsequent events, though not foreseen by the Governor General, were not unnatural consequences of the first causes, that the state of the case is not materially altered; that there is no new danger; and finally, therefore, that the general principle should continue the same; and that his first Judgment should not be reversed.

It will be necessary to compare what were the Governor General's sentiments expressed in his Minute of the 11th August, with the Orders conveyed in his Dispatch of the 29th November.

The Governor General's Minute of the 11th August, states the opinion that there is no reason to believe that the late events at Vellore have been the result of any deep-laid conspiracy. The cause of that Mutiny is ascribed to the Orders regarding the Turband and Dress of the Native Troops.

The Governor General then observes: "The course of Proceedings to be adopted under a supposition that the disaffection of the Army has been occasioned by a long-continued and deep-laid conspiracy existing in a state of considerable progress antecedently to the promulgation of the General Orders, and that which should be pursued under the view of the case which I have taken, are different. The former might require measures of a coercive nature, an active scrutiny, and a firmness and decision calculated to overcome the disaffected: the latter case requires the removal of the cause of discontent, by the abrogation of the obnoxious Orders, the restoration of confidence to the Troops by shewing them confidence on the part of Government, and the very reverse of all coercive measures.

"The appearance of coercion in the second case, might have the appearance of rendering the cause of the Sepoys the cause of Religion."

The Governor General then deprecates the sending an European Force to Fort St. George, as indicating a want of confidence; to limit as much as possible the investigation; to observe the greatest caution in punishing instances of disaffection in individuals in other Stations; to bring to exemplary punishment the perpetrators of the Massacre at Vellore, and to extend a general amnesty to the rest.

These are the general principles which the Governor General in this wise and able Minute recommended for the guidance of this Government.

The spirit of these instructions has already been adopted. The Government, however, did not feel themselves justified in proclaiming a general amnesty. It was considered both impolitic at once to pardon men who had been implicated in Mutiny and murder, and dangerous to release such numbers of men, the effect of whose representations when at large it was impossible to calculate. I agree in the opinion of the Supreme Government lately received, that these men may now be discharged without danger the ferment is passed. But I must beg leave still to retain my opinion, that in the then disposition of the Army, perhaps more than half balancing in favour of disaffection, the intercourse of so many whose companions have been talked of as martyrs in the cause of Religion, might have had the worst effects. It was a precaution from which much good, and no harm could arise.

The Dispatch of the Supreme Government, under date the 29th November, has given a judgment with regard to the same men of an entirely different purport. It is said, "With

“ respect to the persons in confinement, we are of opinion, on a review of all the circumstances of the case, that for the benefit of example a measure of severity is urgently required.” Again,

“ The Principles of Military Discipline urgently require the adoption of a course of proceeding calculated by its severity to inspire awe, and to arrest the progress of contagion. It is rendered still more necessary by the late conduct of the Troops at Nundydroog. Considered in this point of view, the exemplary punishment of the general mass of the Prisoners concerned in the Mutiny at Vellore, is a measure of State necessity, involving the very security of the British Dominions in India ”

“ The indiscriminate punishment of all who may have been seized in the act of Mutiny, or known to have been engaged in it, is peculiarly calculated to deter others from joining in riot, or mutinies.”

And it is afterwards added,

“ We concur in the expediency of the measure suggested in the Council of Fort St. George of consigning to punishment all, among the persons now in confinement, who shall not be able satisfactorily to prove that they were active in suppressing the progress of the Mutiny, or were absent from Vellore at the period of its occurrence. We recommend this measure therefore not from any apprehension of the intrigues and machinations of the persons now in confinement, if immediately or gradually discharged, or of the possible effects of detaining them in the Country in a state of restraint, but from our conviction of the necessity of producing a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of the Army, and the inhabitants of the Country, by a severe example of the just resentment of Government, among the atrocious perpetrators of the Massacre at Vellore.”

The first decision of the Supreme Government had in view principally the cause of the Mutiny. The immediate effect in the Mutiny itself was not a principal consideration. But the primary objects to which our attention was directed, were the consequences which the invasion of the Religious Prejudices and Customs of India might have upon our Army, and upon all the inhabitants of our territories. To do away the impression of a determined plan to attack the Religion of India, and to convert the Natives to Christianity, an impression of not less injurious tendency to the interests of Great Britain in the present than in future times, was our first and highest interest. While this was the leading and main case, other very essential circumstances were not overlooked. All principals in the Mutiny were to be punished, and the great mass forgiven. The second decision of the Supreme Government appears to have entirely laid aside the cause, and to have stripped the case of all the important parts which I have just described. Here it is considered by the Supreme Government in the light of a bare Mutiny, which is to be punished with the utmost severity. I wish the Supreme Government had been more explicit in the exact reasons which had induced this difference of opinion. It is said the Nundydroog transactions had confirmed the necessity of severe measures. I should have understood this decision if it had been formed upon the opinion that disaffection was still continuing, and that nothing but extraordinary severity could be expected to check it. But the Nundydroog proceedings are stated to confirm an opinion already formed; and I am not aware that any of the Communications from this Government to Fort William, from the time of the Mutiny to the transaction of the Nundydroog proceedings, gave any grounds for the supposition that the Mutiny at Vellore had in its origin or consequences a different appearance from that which was assumed by the Governor General in his Minute of the 11th August.

In order to make my opinion of the state of affairs more fully understood, I shall take the liberty of making a short review of all the leading transactions from the time of the Mutiny to the present hour. I shall also venture to conjecture upon the feeling impressed upon the mind of the Governor General in Council which has led to the substitution of alarm, of great precaution, and extraordinary severity, for sanguine expectations, for the manifestation of entire confidence, and for the belief that the Assembly of an European Force was a precaution not necessary, and rather to be avoided than otherwise.

In the course of these reflections I shall assume what I most conscientiously believe, that the general dissatisfaction of the Native Troops wholly and solely arose from the General

Orders about the Turbands and Dress of the Native Troops. That these Orders indicated an intention which was generally believed, that the British Government intended to convert the Sepoys to Christianity. That from our Native Troops the whole of our Native Subjects received the same impression as to the objects of Government. The distribution of the Army throughout all the provinces necessarily made the opinion general, and a report to which the feelings of all men were alive, circulated like wild-fire through every class of society. This general feeling constituted the greatest political danger that could well threaten us. The transactions at Vellore, considered as a Mutiny or as a Massacre, were in point of importance not for a moment to be put in the scale against the consequences of this general sentiment, which might, if it had continued, have placed the British Empire in the most imminent hazard. The punishment of the offenders was made only secondary to the great object of calming the universal alarm for their Religion, of undeceiving the Sepoys and the Publick as to the views of the British Government, and finally of restoring former confidence. For this reason the Orders in question were revoked, Proclamations declaratory of the respect of the Government for the Sacred Prejudices of the Natives were published, all precipitation in punishment which might either have the appearance of revenge, or of rendering the cause of the Sepoys the cause of Religion, was studiously avoided. The Supreme Government concurred in all these sentiments, and recommended to our adoption such measures as were calculated to allay the public agitation. The recommendation went, after the punishment of the principals, to a general amnesty to the remainder.

The Supreme Government were borne out by facts in the truth of almost all the conclusions they had formed. If I may presume to differ with the Governor General in any of his opinions, it is in the too sanguine hope that all agitation would immediately cease upon the revocation of the Orders, and that an additional European Force was unnecessary. I so far concurred with the Governor General, in the greater probability of tranquillity than of continued disorder arising from this measure. But still the history of the World told us, that when popular frenzy rises to an extraordinary pitch, whether influenced by religious or political feelings, it is almost impossible exactly to calculate the extent of its range. We know that there must be numberless discontented spirits both in and out of the Army, and the direction that might be given to the public feeling was a just cause of apprehension. An additional European Force would have been the best prevention of, as well as the best check to, this greatest of evils. In the doubtful issue of events, the resolution of this Government was formed upon the opinion, that precaution was not entirely to be sacrificed to theory.

I am, I confess, doubtful whether the sanguine hopes of the Supreme Government of the cessation of all dissatisfaction, which to them may now appear not to have been entirely realized, or an opinion, that the impression on the public mind, in regard to their Religion, is entirely removed, and need no longer constitute the primary and leading object of our political measures, I say, I am not sure which of these considerations has induced the Governor General in Council to prescribe a directly opposite line of conduct for this Government to that recommended in his former Minute.

I now come to that part of the subject in which I shall attempt to shew, that the case remains in principle where it was, and that the same wise principles should continue to be observed. And I assert this, because I think, and in this consists the essence of the question, that the public mind is still impressed with the belief that this Government did intend to attack their Religion. I state this upon the various representations that have been made from different parts of the country, upon which the Governor in Council has deemed it necessary, within these few days, again to repeat a Proclamation, assuring the Natives of its respect for the Religions of the Country. We know that the same report has prevailed at Wallajabad. We have seen from the report of the Officer at Palamcottah, a strong instance of the public opinion. Lieutenant-Colonel Dyce writes,—

“ So fully were the Mussulmen Sepoys persuaded, in spite of all assurances, that such
“ was our object, and the order of Government, (Conversion to Christianity) that, on hearing

Extract of a Letter from Lieut-Col, Munio, Principal Collector in the Ceded Districts, dated 11 August, Anantpoor

“ However strange it may appear to Europeans, I know that the general opinion of the most intelligent Natives in this part of the Country is, that it was intended to make the Sepoys Christians ”

Palamcottah,
Nov. 27th.

“ the ceremonies connected with the administration of the Oath of Allegiance, they positively believed that the Hindoos had renounced the Faith and Worship of their Forefathers ”

Independent of these and many other facts which might be adduced to illustrate the public opinion, it would be perfectly contrary to the character of the people whom we govern, that they should entertain a different sentiment and feeling. What inference could they draw from Orders directing the discontinuance among the Sepoys of distinctive Marks of Cast, and of Ornaments, as well as the change of their old Turband for a new Head-dress, appearing to them like the Hat of an European. The Sepoy who has been accustomed to those innovations of manners and customs, which, to a certain extent, Military Discipline renders indispensable, might have been supposed not unable to comprehend our real motives. But what could the great mass of the Native Population infer from an apparently direct attack upon forms and ceremonies held by them to be so sacred ? Setting their blind prejudices aside, could the most enlightened of them attribute to our conduct any legitimate object ? Could they fancy that the Sepoy was to be made better or braver ? Could they, in short, imagine to themselves any other reason than that of making the Sepoys more like Europeans ; and as the metamorphosis of the Black Native into the White European was impossible, the one only inference was drawn that an assimilation of Religious Worship was intended.

That this was the general opinion at the time among all classes of people, I know to be the fact. At this time those of the Natives, better informed of our principles, are convinced of the folly of their apprehensions. But the great body of the people, to whom all the acts of Government are only known by their effects, as touching themselves, must remain in ignorance and distrust. They believe that the Sepoys at Vellore died in support of their Religious Faith. They know the cause which led the Sepoys to this act of desperation. They can have but one opinion of the cause itself. They must condemn the Government, and feel compassion for the sufferers. As the whole feeling of the country seems in great measure devoted to Religious observances, there seldom can have happened a case in which popular sympathy can have been more strongly excited.

These impressions time alone can efface. But is it deserving of no consideration in what manner this story shall descend through the present day to posterity ? Shall we send it down blazoned with every possible horror ? Shall it be said, —

“ The Europeans wanted to convert the Sepoys to Christianity ;—the Sepoys preferred death ;—a conflict ensued ;—hundreds were killed in the struggle, —a severe execution of the prisoners took place on the spot, —many others were hanged or shot by sentence of Courts Martial ! Not content with so much bloodshed, many hundred men were banished from their country and their families for ever ! ” This is indeed not an exact statement of the fact ; but is it an impossible mode of representation by the ignorant, bigoted, and deluded populace ?

Our interest is certainly to convince the people that no hostility to their Religion was intended. This is our first care. It is this conviction of our regard for their Religious customs, on their minds, upon which will depend chiefly “ the preservation of those bonds of connection by which the interests of the People and the Army are identified with the interests of the State.” Is this likely to be effected by a departure from the characteristics of the British Government ; mercy, but great firmness, —and by the application of the Asiatic principle of general punishment to the particular case in question ? A system of terror seems little calculated to reclaim mistaken opinions, or to infuse confidence. A system of terror is calculated to overcome actual revolt and mutiny.

I shall presently examine how far the contagion may be spreading, and may require such violent remedies.

I have hitherto considered the question as regarding the transactions at Vellore, and the public opinion consequent to that event. I shall now examine the various circumstances that have taken place since the Vellore Mutiny, for the purpose of shewing how far the original case may or may not be altered by them.

The first agitation at Wallajabad followed the Vellore Mutiny too close to be considered as a separate transaction. The only event that has since occurred where the Sepoys have

shewn disaffection, took place at Nundydroog, where there were four Companies of one of the Battalions of the 18th Regiment.

I have read the Proceedings of the Committee of Inquiry with great attention, and I must confess that, considering the great degree of caution with which Indian testimony must be received, the alarm appears to me to have been greatly exaggerated. There appears to me to be one fact alone which seems perfectly clear, that in those Companies there did prevail a disposition very unfavourable to the British interests. I doubt very much the intention of the Sepoys to massacre the European Officers. The departure of the families is a strong circumstance in favour of the opposite opinion; but even this fact is not conclusive to my judgment. The existence of dissatisfaction was probably well known to all the families. The example at Vellore had coupled disaffection and massacre together, and it would be probable for women, knowing of the one, to live in apprehension of the other. At such a time a report, circulated by a single individual, that a massacre was to happen, would drive away all the families. It seems extraordinary that the Committee should not have examined the families themselves as to the fact and cause of their departure. It is sworn in evidence by one of the Sepoys, that he went to one of the huts at seven o'clock, and found it empty; at ten the family had returned. I cannot think there was any conspiracy formed at the time of the murder of the Europeans. Nothing that has since happened confirms the intention. There have been no desertions of the principal conspirators, and no positive information to the point has since been received. The supposed connection with Bangalore, and the actual disaffection of that part of the Battalion stationed there, seems to be extremely doubtful. The Puppet-show, said to be the engine of this Conspiracy, is not very satisfactorily explained. I understand from those who have seen these exhibitions, that they as frequently display the rout of one party as of the other. It does not seem at all extraordinary that actors, whose business it is to suit their representations to the taste and feelings of their audience, having found the British name not in very high esteem, should have chosen for an entertainment the Defeat of the British Troops. I am inclined to ascribe rather more of bad intention to the Native Officers than to the Puppet-show Man. If this latter personage had been really the Agent of a Mussulman Conspiracy, it is, I think, as likely that the Mussulmen should have been the victors as the French. But, in truth, at Nundydroog, as elsewhere, general alarm and distrust prevailed. Every trifling circumstance that usually passes without notice at other times, was magnified into Conspiracy. A Tri-coloured Flag is found at Seringapatam. French intrigue immediately stares us in the face. Any real connection of this Tri-coloured Flag and the French interests remains to be made out. I have heard a very reasonable and a very innocent explanation given to this various-coloured Ensign. A Paper is found upon the person of a man at Nundydroog, said to come from Mecca, and supposed to be intended as a prophetic distribution of future Conquests, in which Moors, Hindoos, and French are to share, and the British alone to be excluded. An officer who has seen this document, and is enabled, by his knowledge of the language, to understand its meaning, states it to be a very innocent game played at by the Natives, and not to have the most remote connection with political intrigue.

I shall beg leave here to advert to an opinion taken up at the time of the Vellore Mutiny, and since adhered to by the Commander in Chief, and several Military Officers, that the Turband had little concern with the general dissatisfaction, and that this feeling was produced by a deep-laid Mussulman Conspiracy. I am far from thinking this to be an unreasonable opinion, when the object of the principal Vellore Conspirators was to establish a Government of their own Faith, and the destruction of Europeans. The error seems to have consisted in taking the effect for the cause. But however reasonable I may admit this opinion to be, yet I must also say that its adoption was extremely unfortunate for the interests of the Government, and for the early restitution of confidence. First appearances certainly gave reason to suppose the Mutiny at Vellore to originate with the Mussulmen. These first appearances of what the plot was, may without difficulty be imagined to correspond very much with what the passions of the Officers of the Army might wish the plot to appear to be to the world. If the Religious Prejudices of the Natives had been violated by the practice of the Military Service,

every Officer in the command of a Corps, and indeed every Captain in command of a Company, became more or less implicated in responsibility. The question became a party question, and has unluckily been accompanied with much of that warmth which usually attends the agitation of subjects in which the passions or interests of great bodies of men are warmly concerned. The very decided opinion of the Commander in Chief would necessarily give a sanction and encouragement without any active efforts on his part to the general conclusion. If the agitation had terminated with the Vellore Mutiny, the real cause of it might possibly still have been a matter of speculation. But the effect of the revocation of the Orders, which pacified at once the alarming ferment at Hyderabad, and which has had the same effect generally, proves indubitably the real origin of the mischief.

But allowing the cause to be as here stated, namely, alarm for their Religion; still it may be said that the Mussulmen have taken the advantage of the feelings, and have conspired to the destruction of the Government. But where does this appear? At Nundydroog Mussulmen and Hindoos were equally concerned; each appear to have had in view, as far as there was any view at all, the aggrandisement of his Class upon the ruins of the British Government. Purneah, who ought to be more alive than any other man to the effects of Mussulman intrigues at Mysore, does not believe in their existence. It was his opinion that the Hindoos had been much more alarmed by the supposed intentions of the British Government than the Mussulmen. The Nundydroog proceedings present one most favourable inference, that though there might be disaffection, there exists no combination of interests, no uniform object, no appearance of intrigues originating in one common source. At Sankerrydroog the supposed ringleader is an Hindoo Native Officer. At Wallajahbad the Mussulmen Native Officers have appeared active. But the exact nature of that agitation has not appeared, and the Report of the Quarter Master General is very satisfactory to the general fidelity of the suspected Corps.

It certainly appears that the Mussulmen are the most active Conspirators; this is a natural consequence of their superior boldness, of their ambition, and of the violent character of their Religious Bigotry; as they are better Soldiers, so would they be better Conspirators than the Hindoos.

But, with all this, there is no trace of a plot—no source from whence these machinations sprung. If I am asked, how I can account for an agitation supposed to be so general, I must answer, that the primary cause has not yet ceased to operate. It may be said in reply, Why then followed a period of three months after the revocation of the Orders, without any apparent sign of discontent? To this I must say, that the great mass, perhaps all, were in all probability perfectly satisfied for the time by the measure of Government.—Why then did the dissatisfaction revive? To this I must answer, that all mankind are not perfect, are not endowed with equal reason, and equal goodness of intention. In all assemblies, composed as the Military Corps are, there will be a great many individuals impatient of subjection, prone to turbulence and disorder. The passions of these men had been roused, and were easily revived. Another effect of the first cause still might be supposed to continue, the activity of the Emissaries of the principal Conspirators or discontented. These Emissaries are not, in my opinion, the commissioned agents of any one man, or of any party. They are self-created, or rather created by the original cause which led all men to unite under the same banners, and made agents of the most enthusiastic in their several Religious Prejudices. These would be joined by all those who had suffered by the different changes of Government, and by a still more numerous class, consisting of those who had nothing to lose, and every thing to gain by insurrection and confusion. These men are still hallooing the old cry of Christianity. And there will always be fools and rogues who will become ready proselytes to any preacher either of religion or sedition. The curious report from the Officer in command of Bellary is not inapplicable to the present assertion. This seems to me to be the precise state of the minds of the Army at the present moment. It is to me a matter of surprise that more symptoms of agitation have not followed this great storm. It has always been my opinion that a few individuals might possibly suffer, but the Empire at large was safe. I am convinced that disaffection daily more and more subsides. I have perfect reliance in the con-

tent and allegiance of the very great mass. A few discontented spirits in each Corps, attacked by this return of fever, may occasionally make a sort of movement, which the weakness and distrust of our European Officers have magnified into Mutiny and Massacre. The fact is, that the Army is haunted with this Mussulman Conspiracy. The word is as great a bugbear to the European Officer, as the word Turband has been to the frightened Sepoy, and the conspiracies of Sankerrydroog, Palamcottah, and Quilon, have more the appearance of an Insurrection of the Officers against the Sepoys, than of the latter against the former.

From the best consideration which I have given to the present state of affairs, it appears to me that nothing is requisite, but for the Government to pursue its ordinary course with steadiness and firmness. Our policy seems to me to be much the same with that which once saved the Roman Empire, in allusion to which, it was said of the author of it, "*Unus qui nobis cunctando restituit rem.*" Our policy seems to be to take no measure of extraordinary energy and severity out of the common practice. Having punished the Mutineers with a degree of severity seldom surpassed in the history of modern times, offence should cease; the Government should, in my opinion, now place itself on the most strict defensive. Our system should be entirely one of precaution, unless indeed new events should arise, and that the subject should assume a new form, different from what it bears at present. We should use every possible endeavour, which I hope has not been neglected, to assure the Army, who have been alarmed for their Religious Prejudices, of our respect for them; to observe the utmost vigilance in preventing the intrigues of wicked and designing persons; to instil, by an appeal to their sense and honour, confidence into the breasts of the European Officers; and, lastly, to make the best disposition of the means within our power to provide for the worst. If I am to say at this moment what I conceive to be the prominent evil and danger of the present day, — it is the mutual distrust between the Officer and Native Troops.

The banishment of the large body of Sepoys now in confinement, appears to me to be ill calculated to obtain any of these objects.

With regard to the first cause of the agitation, public compassion must be with those who fell for their Faith. It is every man's cause in this Country, where the Rulers entertain a different persuasion. If that feeling of compassion can be humoured without sacrificing a more important object, it is wise to do it; at any rate, the less that feeling is offended, the better. Great pity, for one party must engender hatred for the other. We want to recal affection.

With regard to the Mutiny itself, I agree, that taking it simply by itself, and unconnected with any other circumstance, the punishment to be given to it cannot well be too severe. But I must say also that such punishment should be prompt. It was prompt, and it was most severe. To begin again to punish, after five months' consideration, seems to partake neither of justice nor humanity.

Such a proceeding would only be warranted by the continuance of a spirit of turbulence. The events which have taken place since the Vellore Mutiny do not justify the conclusion. From all the information I can learn, the dissatisfaction is fast dying away, and I am of opinion that nothing but our own imprudence can keep it alive.

I therefore beg leave to recommend that the remonstrance of this Government be respectfully made to the Governor General in Council, against the banishment of the prisoners now in confinement.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK

Fort St. George,
January 8th, 1807.

(g g)

(In Secret Consultation, 9th January, 1807)

MINUTE OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF.

I SHALL not at all enter upon the question whether it is proper to oppose the Instructions from the Supreme Government for the Banishment of the Prisoners at Vellore and Fort St. George, as the point of Right or otherwise will exclusively remain under the responsibility of those who may either suspend or set aside the measure. But as I have viewed the late Orders from Bengal with the highest satisfaction, so I shall express my serious concern that obedience to any part of them is for a moment delayed, as every hour retarded adds to the ill consequences which, in my opinion, has resulted from opposite proceeding.

As the whole of this Paper is to plead the cause of action, and undervalue the efficacy of simple discussion, I will avoid all argument upon the motives of the Insurrection at Vellore, and, leaving the decision to the various documents on record, I will hasten to the events that have taken place since that unhappy occurrence, as the unerring description of our present situation, which, if properly viewed, may lead to the adoption of measures that will close the painful scene.

It has been my misfortune, and the source of much private concern, to entertain a difference of sentiment from the Head of this Government, upon almost every point connected with Vellore, or the agitations that have continued since that period, and as most of the acts of Government, of importance to the subject, have been contrary to my voice, I have therefore watched with proportionate anxiety the course of events; and it appeared to me a reasonable conclusion, that, as success or failure marked the progress of the measures pursued, I might in justice determine their wisdom or unfitness.

I conceive that no explanation is required to illustrate the perfect disappointment of every expectation, and that through the long period of six months since the catastrophe at Vellore, though no event has been marked with blood, it has yet been one unvarying scene at some Station or another (supposed or real) of agitation, seduction, and alarm. As soon as one annoying communication is disposed of, another arises, and all the succeeding prophecies or promises of cessation by the upholder of the present system, are deferred so long, that the wearied mind rejects all hope of its arrival. The language is now introduced, that the original agitation could not have subsided sooner, and that were it otherwise it would be surprising; but it appears to me, that had this patient doctrine been declared six months ago, and that we had been told we were in resignation to await that term, before the happy effects of the course pursued could be visible, the active mind would have turned away from so submissive a forbearance, and sought a council more in unison with the British genius, and the character of the Country.

It is with solid satisfaction that I now look back to the Records that bear witness to every stage of event, as I can perceive that I have no opinion to wish altered, and that from the commencement I either proposed, or supported those measures, that are at present directed, either from their original propriety, or to amend or alter our existing state.

It is this view that saves me from much argument at present, and will render my remarks of small comparative bulk; for as I have no point to gain, either in defence or proposal, it could only be in me a spirit of contentious controversy, to repeat, or amplify upon, what has already gone through the minutest detail of discussion, and might appear sufficient to satisfy the most obstinate disputant.

If the main object under consideration seems to require a special notice, I have only to add, that all my original sentiments upon the necessity of the Banishment of the Prisoners (where no innocence could be discovered) are strengthened by the miscarriage of our hopes;

and that in proportion as Sedition, Insubordination, and Alarm has prevailed, or increased, since the rejection of this measure, at one period unanimously agreed on by the Council (9th August), to the same degree I view the wisdom of its immediate adoption, that the impression may be dispelled, that it is apprehension which restrains from further punishment; for, as then guilt is declared to the whole world by their imprisonment for six months, it neither requires the acuteness of an European mind, nor will it escape the perception of the Native, so alive to the feeling, that it is another sentiment than genuine humanity that operates, and that in their respective breasts we have exposed ourselves to the incalculable evil of supposed timidity, or the disrepute of fluctuating councils.

That Banishment should be the lot of these Prisoners was the recorded recommendation of every person whose office it was to enquire into their guilt; it was urged in the most formal manner by the Native General Court-Martial, who, instead of any endeavours to conceal or lessen the crime of their Brethren, solicited this general punishment as alone applicable to the nature of their offence (where distinction or shade in iniquity could not be observed), as even mercy to wretches who by the foulest and most cowardly deeds had forfeited all claim to the character of Men, Subjects, or Soldiers.

I recur to an argument already employed — Would the Supporters of Confinement, or the Opposers of Banishment, at this period, have tolerated the notion six months ago, that at the present hour we should not have advanced a step towards the settlement of a point that seemed of all others to rule the fate of a general restoration, and that the promptitude in proceeding, with all its attendant offspring of Confidence, Oblivion, Harmony, &c — expressions that directed every pen — should only be found in the well-composed Papers on the Table, and that having discharged that mental duty, we are careless of the effects of our resolves, and have to undergo the mortification of being roused to activity by the admonitions of the Supreme Government? If I shall be told that we were on the point of action, I must hesitate in my belief; for, should the Question be carried that Banishment is not to take place (I put perpetual Confinement out of the view, as a measure that no one will meditate), I now ask, are we prepared to liberate these Prisoners, and suffer them to range throughout the Country in triumph, relating their successful deeds of blood, magnifying the exploit, and inviting others to follow the example, as opportunity may arise, which may lead to the gain of every thing the mind of the impatient Native may aspire to, and which will appear, through the conclusive evidence of their own persons, free from danger or punishment? I early foretold the embarrassment in which we are now placed, and that every hour since we departed from the first resolution would create further difficulty. I assure the Council the public eye has been fixed upon the very point under consideration, that it has been with them the index to our sentiments and actions, I solemnly declare before Heaven, that, out of the Council, I do not recollect to have heard the voice that was against it, but, on the contrary, that it has been the judgment of the most enlightened and experienced in every branch of the united Service, that had the measure of Banishment been pursued with correspondent acts of promptitude and vigour, and had the Government evinced a high and offended spirit suited to the Indian mind, agitation would have disappeared, and that the deed of Vellore, though a frightful explosion, would have remained the solitary instance of the Disaffection of the Sepoy.

To prove that this wise principle has not been neglected, it is stated, “That all Principals in the Mutiny have been taken and punished:” — again, “That the Mutineers having been punished with a degree of severity seldom surpassed in modern times, offence should cease — Sensibility is alarmed by the affecting appeal of public compassion for those that died in defence of their Faith — that we should consider how the story of punishment shall descend to posterity — and shall we send it down blazoned with every possible honor?” — The application of these sentiments to an event that was intended, under unparalleled circumstances of atrocity, to extirpate every European from India, I confess I do not comprehend; and this reflection so composes my feelings to the political view of the subject alone, that I am enabled to consider without weakness those measures that the wisdom and experience of others teach me to be the most likely to avert the recurrence of events, which, if suffered to be viewed under the attraction of impunity, will again revive, and lead to the debasement

of the English character and that ascendancy that will allow of no attain, and which will best preserve our situation in this Country.

It is presumed that the lives that were lost in the hour of conflict, or of just indignation on the spot, are not to be taken into the account if not, I know of no more than seventeen persons that have suffered execution, and when I consider that there were alive sixteen hundred guilty Military persons (the Pettah and the Palace excluded) engaged in the Massacre of the unhappy Garrison, I cannot view the punishment as of the complexion described, and when I also know that many of the principal Ringleaders of the Revolt and Murder are still at large, and that it was not until six months afterwards a Proclamation was issued for their apprehension (I am not sure it is yet done), I cannot think we are yet arrived at the bounds "that offence, or, in other terms, a just and necessary vindication, should cease." I am to add to this, that I learn that all the Civil Prisoners lately tried by the Civil Commission at Chittoor, though their guilt is acknowledged, are acquitted for want or neglect of evidence, and that no person, in salutary example, can be punished belonging to that hostile Pettah, where for several days before the Massacre was committed (according to the Report I lately laid before the Government), the intention was publicly declared, and we had not a friend, or a faithful active person in employ, to give the intelligence.

At this moment (it will soon be remedied by the late Orders from Bengal to break the guilty Regiments) there are numbers of persons, both as Officers and Privates, under the heaviest suspicion, still doing duty as if nothing had happened, though it is well known they had an equal share in the execrable deed of the 10th July, and such is the horror in which their conduct is held by the Loyal Battalion in Garrison (the 20th N. I.), that they will not suffer any communication, or admit them even into their Hospital. What must be the opinion and consequences of such Impunity? I grant it is Moderation, but I do not view in it that Firmness ever annexed in sound, which is necessary to dignify even that amiable quality, and prevent its excess from falling into disrepute. It appears that every act of severity is now weighed, and that unless this measure of Banishment, after a confinement of six months, produced through doubt and irresolution, may too much load the scale, it cannot be considered we depart either from Justice or Mercy.

I feel that it may be said, Why has not the Commander in Chief taken more decisive steps? Why has he not pursued measures applicable to Mutiny and Revolt, when the authority of Courts-Martial rests so much in his hands? I trust that my advocates will plead, in their knowledge of the Constitution of this State, he can do nothing without the authority of Government, and that if they chuse to interpose, the exercise of every power lies with them. It will appear that I have not withheld the communication of any circumstance, and submitted at the time such recommendations as I thought most suited to the case. Having discharged this necessary duty, as no Special Authority was delegated to me (and I was without encouragement to act independent), I could do no more than take the share of an individual, and my reputation was to rest on the issue of such measures as I advised or disapproved.

Here the question of the Banishment of the Prisoners might rest; but the Minute of the Right Honourable the President contains so much further observation, that it is impossible to avoid some explanation; and yet I have great embarrassment to contend with, for as I had resolved not to enter upon the wearying subject of the Origin of the Mutiny at Vellore, I scarcely know how to proceed in answer to remarks that give again a history of that event, and assume every circumstance and fact upon causes far different from those I believe; and if I attempt to reply at any length, the argument and toil of six months past will be renewed as warmly as ever.

To avert this, I must again call the attention of the Council to the Records, to review, in their own minds, the successive Papers and Documents that have come before them, and give their evidence (as the Juryman on his Oath) upon what they have seen and heard, and not either upon what they would wish to believe themselves, nor what they would wish the world to believe. It is my opinion that the sooner any person concerned in Government reaches the truth the better, and that it is of no use to disguise or palliate those evils, that

can only be removed by knowing them, and, from that knowledge, by the application of suitable remedies

It is said that it would be a most desirable point, were it "exclusively" imagined, that the adoption of the Turband give rise to, and continued, the present Disorders. I immediately reply, "That so it would, provided it were true; but if not true, what object do we gain? We may impose upon the ignorant, and give them a momentary satisfaction, but how will the enlightened receive this agreeable but deceitful declaration, that lulls us to false security, and prevents the interposition of those measures that will avert the recurrence of danger? If any person believes that it is the Turband, or rather, Orders that have produced the present Commotion, as those imagined evils are completely removed, he certainly may lay aside anxiety, and pursue his ordinary action, but if the majority of the world will suspect that other causes are at work, and that a Mussulman or domestic Discontent has led to the agitation (again I call the attention of the Council to what they know and hear), I say, that those will not admit the efficacy of a declaration — that it is a Turband Fever, that produces Fits with little intermission, but will demand correspondent remedy, either by the alterations of Systems, which are suspected to be erroneous, or by the employment, or amelioration, of that numerous and ardent Class, now in almost universal poverty and ill-humour, whose feelings are read in the face of every passing Mooriman, who either eyes the European (the picture is acknowledged) in fixed anger, or turns aside in alienation and disgust.

It is said, that it must be natural that a Party Question should arise upon the Origin of Sepoy discontent. For as the Army had been well, or rather governed to their satisfaction, so must every Officer, to the Captain of a Company, feel a responsibility. This is a delicate position, for it equally applies to the State and its Government, and it may not escape observation, that in the ingenuity which gives the suspicion birth, perhaps, is discovered the first circumstance of Party or Self-Interest.

It is urged with severe complaint that the European Officers exhibit a want of confidence toward the Sepoys that is full of the most dangerous consequences, and the point the most to be resisted. With the deepest concern I agree to and lament the evil, and far be it from me to enter upon the defence of any Officer who may seem not to have fulfilled the first principles of the military character, by presence of mind and cool deliberation; and all the records will prove, that I have instilled confidence and banished suspicion on the point of honour and self-devotion, if the cause demanded it, rather than risque the evil of a false distrust. But Justice seems to ask the question, What cause can have produced so extraordinary an effect? and that the former reliance upon the Sepoy attachment (it may be said a blind and petulant partiality, that would admit of no argument, a fond and comparative exaltation of their merit with the European Soldier), should have so suddenly ceased, and given way to sentiments of distrust and alienation? That such were the feelings of the Commanding Officers of Corps, even of those who now appear the supporters of an opposite opinion, is a fact within universal knowledge, and that no such suspicion was entertained (exclusive of the contagion at Vellore) till within these three months.

It has burst through the Army since the publication of the Order of the 24th September, giving by the authority of Government, when it was no longer necessary, and all was already done that could be required, the licence to the Sepoy to think and act as he pleased upon the articles of his Dress, with other concessions (I refer to the Order), and however modified was the expression, its nature must ever produce the effect of insubordination. The majority of the Council saw the dangerous tendency, and would have averted the issue, as not required by the spirit of the Instruction from Supreme Government.

I can speak from a knowledge of the universal sentiment, through every species of communication from the Army, that this Order is conceived to be the source that has led to insubordination on the part of the Corps, and the consequent alteration in the good opinion of the Officers. I early foresaw and expressed it, in my Minute of September on the subject, that language could not be devised in the construction of so pointed an Order, that would not declare to the Sepoy he had hitherto been oppressed, and that his oppressors were his Officers. Both sides are placed in a trying situation, the Sepoy learns that he has been

treated ill, and it must be true, "for the Government tells him so," and the Officer regards the Sepoy under the view (what an oppressor either declared or real will ever suspect) that his feelings, as an injured person, should meditate revenge.

The language of every Officer is, that the Genius of Discord, in a descent upon our Army, could not have suggested a measure of more destructive effect to discipline, harmony, and confidence. Late events have been unexpected, but it is the more required that we shall not lose our presence of mind, for if, by crouching to either the Sepoy or the Native, we impair that dignity of demeanour which gave us our character in this Country, we cannot go on, and shall have to rebuild, at great risque, that elevation from which we chose to descend.

It seems fair to listen to, and then appreciate the extenuation that the European Officers (alluded to) plead in their excuse. They ask, Are we not allowed to be judges of what passes under our direct view? Have we any interest in the falsehood, if we state, that the whole demeanour of the Sepoy is so changed, that we cannot recognize any shade of that former respect and submission that marked his character? Are we to overlook the groups in conversation, and the nightly cabals? What construction are we to put upon their averted looks, or perhaps an overstrained courtesy, than that things are not what they were, and that some design must impend, of which nothing but their fears prevent a perpetration? These Officers report, that through every part of the country, itinerants of every description range, to circulate the most fatal poison; and, under the cloak of sanctity and religion, inflame the mind of the Sepoy; inculcating the most destructive measures, as praise-worthy, and of sacred reward. They view these wretches amid their lines, and at their barrack gates, uncontrouled or unmolested by any police, ready to assail the deluded Sepoy as soon as he is dismissed from his parade, and the astonished Officer, incapable to apply a remedy, for he is without power or respect, has only to give vent to his feelings by communication. It would be natural in him to interfere, but in the present order of things I conceive it would be a dangerous enterprise on his part; and all he can now do, not to remain in absolute inactivity, is to prefer the complaint of what he sees or hears. We all acknowledge that the most dangerous language is in general circulation; and yet I do not know of one successful effort of the Magistrates or Police, and I do not believe that a single disseminator of mischief is at this moment in custody.

The Officer, however high his rank, is at present in India without a shadow of authority; and, in a country like this, it must follow, without respect. He has no means of information, no power over his Bazar, or cantonment, beyond the exercise of a parade; and he cannot in any shape, except through simple communication, take a step like vigour or prevention.

At the time that the general crisis of the world has demanded during the struggle, that the Military energy should be supported and extended in this part of India, we have chosen that moment to drop that character, and rather wish to lower, and degrade it by system. Approved merit in the habit of an Officer loses its value, and we prefer now to trust to the chance intellect of an inexperienced boy. The former safeguard of years and experience are no longer required. All practice at this eventful period gives way to theory. It is reserved for the present times that a Commanding Officer is to witness the approach of persons upon his parade to seize a supposed offender*, and without communication carry him off. And it is possible that this Sepoy, or Native Officer, may be condemned to labour on the public roads (I speak from facts) without the knowledge of his fate. This is the blind introduction of English laws and usages in this country, where no one circumstance can authorize the assimilation. What can the Native think, who has hitherto been used to view the Army with veneration? or what does the Sepoy imagine, who formerly looked up to his Officer with reverence and awe, when he perceives, that he is no longer the same personage, and cannot now afford him redress, or even listen to his complaints?

* This is contrary to Regulations. But the want of conciliation and common respect too often causes the neglect.

The intentions are most laudable, that the English principles of equality and independence should produce their blessed effects equally here as in England, but a little reflection, or intercourse with the experienced Residents in the County, will correct the error, for it is easy to learn, that if equality is established, of course the chief feature of our ascendancy is surrendered, and the view of respective numbers cannot be withheld (the language now prevails), and we shall have to repent, without redemption, those advantages that we dispossessed ourselves of through a wild philanthropy, that has certainly taken away security, and it is very doubtful if the loss will confer happiness where it is intended.

But I return to the immediate question of Banishment, and its salutary effect of example. I am told that disaffection is rapidly subsiding, that it is upon the point to expire. Doubts may be entertained of this extent of expectation, from a recent necessity, as appeared to the Council, to discharge 76 men, in addition to many others, from the representation of the Commanding Officer of the 2d Battalion of the 1st Regiment, who officially declared he had no hopes of the good conduct of his Battalion, unless the measure was complied with. But I am sure it will end the sooner if we follow the direction of the Supreme Government, for insubordination only began to rear its head after the events at Vellore, when it was discovered that we had given over the intention of punishment, whether through apprehension or wisdom the ignorant multitude could not determine.

Instead of delay, I would solicit every expedition; for while a prisoner remains undisposed of, either by liberation or banishment, the story of Vellore will never cease. It has been one uniform expression, to extinguish the recollection; yet we have delayed, through an irresolution in proceeding, the very act that comprehends the whole essence of the undertaking.

The invitation to delay, as introduced in the Latin quotation *Unusque nobis cunctando restituit rem* applies to the mood of a foreign enemy; who, in possession of superior powers, was on the point of overwhelming the Kingdom, and whose course could not be resisted in the open field; but I think that Fabius would have disclaimed the applause had it been bestowed for protracted proceeding, if in the plenitude of every superiority of real or supposed strength, he had suffered a domestic and secret foe to advance, and given to him the chance of establishment, through the neglect of counteraction.

It is my opinion, that the statue would be better raised to the skilful physician who thus addresses his patient, or the state: *Venienti occurrere morbo, vita mutanda est. Pele salutem vel acerrimis modis, sed morares abit dies.*

(Signed)

J. F. CRADOCK,
Lieut.-Gen.

Madras, January 8, 1807.

(h h)

MINUTE OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT.

THE Supreme Government having fully left the disposal of the Vellore Mutineers now in confinement to the discretion of this Government, I shall now state my sentiments upon this question.

It is first necessary for me to observe, that no alteration has taken place in the opinion expressed in my Minute regarding the inexpediency of banishing these men; namely, that in the present state of the County, no danger would ensue from their enlargement.

Adhering to this sentiment, it only remains for me to consider the least objectionable mode of carrying the measure into effect. The decision seems to turn upon the two following points: Whether their sentence shall be at once declared by the direct authority of Govern-

ment; or whether their crimes shall undergo Investigation and Trial before a Tribunal regularly constituted under Judicial Regulations.

In many cases since the Mutiny the authority of Government has been summarily exercised. These were, however, all of a nature not to admit, without manifest danger, either of escape from punishment or of delay in the execution of it. Instant example was requisite to arrest the progress of intrigue and disaffection.

In the present instance none of these considerations exists to urge the same mode of proceeding. Many reasons on the contrary seem to be favourable to a regular judicial investigation, by which the various distinctions of guilt, of murder, of plunder, and of mutiny, will be made manifest, and will be publicly marked with the Sentence which the Law attaches to each; such a process is consonant with the principles of justice upon which the Civil Code is founded, and upon which the British Government is professed to be established. Two necessary and important effects can alone be produced by a Trial - the one to shew that no crime shall pass unnoticed; and the second to heighten, by previous conviction, the value of pardon to those to whom the Government may be pleased to grant it. Every one of the Mutineers will be found guilty under the Mahommedan Law, and not one of them should, in my judgment, escape punishment, who may appear either to have been active in the Mutiny, or to have committed murder or robbery.

This mode of disposal appears the most intelligible, and the least liable to misconstruction. The immediate release of the great body of the prisoners without trial might be attributed to fear. An act of grace might possibly encourage the disaffected or troublesome, whom dread alone of the punishment might keep in order. It might be ascribed to indifference to our best interests, and to a want of vigilance and energy, upon which bad men might presume. By a previous trial, by executing some, by banishing others, by sentencing to hard labour those who have been guilty of plunder, and by forgiving the mass, who probably were really innocent, the measure in all its parts will bear with it its own clear explanation. It appears to me the best, because it is both the most just and the most plain to all capacities.

The delay that may take place in the trial of so many hundred prisoners may appear an objection to this process; but as there is only evidence against a very small portion of the mass, and that the whole acknowledge to have been present at the Mutiny, conviction will be at once pronounced upon their own confession. Some time will be required to collect witnesses to the fact of stolen property having been found on the persons of some of the prisoners. This will not be the affair of many days. In three weeks or a month all the trials may be concluded. The gradual liberation of the prisoners will be another effect of this way of proceeding, which will obviate much possible inconvenience.

If this proposition be approved, I shall recommend the formation of two Special Commissions, as prescribed by the Regulations, to assemble at Vellore and Madras.

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

Fort St. George, April 1, 1807.

AS the Board concur in the mode recommended by Lord William Bentinck for the disposal of the Mutineers who are in confinement, his Lordship is requested to state to the Board his opinion respecting the further arrangement which remains to be adopted for the formation of the Special Commissions required for the trial of the prisoners.

April 2, 1807.

(ii)

THE Board having met in Council in conformity to the communication contained in the Minute of Lord William Bentinck of the 16th *instant*, for the purpose of taking into consideration, in communication with Lord Minto, the most expedient mode of disposing of the numerous Prisoners who were concerned in the Mutiny of Vellore, and whose fate still remains to be determined; the following general considerations have occurred to the Board as the most advisable course to be observed in the present case.

The Board entirely agree that it is advisable that as early a termination as may be practicable should be put to the whole of the Vellore question; and it is deemed advisable that the mode of Trial by a General Court Martial should be avoided.

The Board will be enabled to go more fully into the subject when the Proceedings of the Commission lately held at Vellore, and which are now under translation, shall have been completed; but with reference to such parts of the Reports of the Commission assembled at Vellore and at the Presidency, as are now before the Board, it appears as a general principle, the Native Officers who were concerned in the Mutiny, the Native Troops who were on the main guard of Vellore on the night of that event, and such other Sepoys as are reported to have been guilty of offences attended with circumstances of peculiar atrocity, should be punished in such manner as the Board may hereafter think expedient, the Board being at present inclined to think that it may be advisable to make a distinction in the punishment of these Classes, by banishing the Native Officers and the more atrocious offenders, subjecting the rest to some other punishment within the limits of the Territories under the Presidency. In regard to the remainder of the persons in custody, it is the opinion of the Board that they should be released, subject to the disqualification which is already understood to exist against their ever being admitted into the service of the Company.

It appearing from the Reports now before the Board that a further knowledge has been obtained of persons whose conduct has been meritorious in the course of the Mutiny, the Board are of opinion that it will be proper that some adequate reward should be conferred on such persons when more distinct information shall have been obtained regarding them; and it is resolved that the Commander in Chief be accordingly requested to express his sentiments more particularly on the several cases of the above nature.

The Board are of opinion that the above measures should be carried into effect with the least possible delay. The Board understanding from the Commander in Chief that two persons out of five men under sentence of death by a General Court Martial for Murder, committed in the Mutiny, are to be executed, are of opinion that the execution of these sentences would furnish the most eligible occasion for carrying into effect the several resolutions described in this Minute.

Madras, 19th July, 1807.

 (jj)

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK'S MINUTE.

BY the fortunate occasion of the presence of the Governor-General at Madras, we were enabled with the assistance of his Lordship's advice to form a determination upon the principle which should regulate the punishment of the Vellore Mutineers still remaining in confinement. I must refer the Governor in Council to the Minutes of the 19th July, 1807.

The general principles determined upon at that meeting were, " that the Native Officers who were concerned in the Mutiny, the Native Troops who were on the main guard of Vel-lore on the night of that event, and such other Sepoys as are reported to have been guilty of offences attended with circumstances of peculiar atrocity, should be punished in such manner as the Board may hereafter think expedient; the Board being inclined at present to think that it may be advisable to make a distinction in the punishment of the Classes, by banishing the Native Officers and the more atrocious offenders, subjecting the rest to some other punishment within the limits of the Territories under the Presidency. In regard to the remainder of the prisoners in confinement, it is the opinion of the Board that they should be released, subject to the disqualification against their being ever re-admitted into the Company's Service "

Having deliberately considered the whole subject, and having carefully examined each separate case, I shall state in reference to the Classes mentioned in the preceding extract, how far the application of those principles may seem expedient or warranted by the circumstances which have appeared in the Report of the two Commissions

I shall commence with the Native Officers whose names are inserted in the margin. The number of the deposition is affixed to each name. I will examine them separately.

Class First,
No 2,
On duty.
No 1 Subidar
Syed Sussam,
senior Native
Officer on the
Main Guard.

No. 1. The greatest degree of guilt apparently should attach to this Officer. He was the senior Native Officer on the main guard. The Commission state, after the Massacre of the Europeans he held a conference with the Prince Moizuddeen, and was found inside the Palace. It is presumed by the Commission that this Officer's rank and influence among the Conspirators must have been great, in consequence of the service supposed to have been assigned to him of commanding the main guard. It is to be remarked on the other hand, that the Mutiny was not intended to have taken place on that night, and that it was the result of accident. This fact is perfectly well known to the Government, though it might not have been in evidence before the Commission, whose inquiry was limited to the guilt of the persons immediately before them. The presumption of extraordinary guilt founded upon the principal part assigned to this Officer is false. I have from Major Trotter another circumstance, which might invalidate even the supposition of this prisoner having been very active in the Mutiny. Major Trotter states, that this Officer was at the time so ill as not to be capable of going the rounds. Admitting all the extenuation that may be derived from these facts, there still remains against him his remaining with the guard, his interview with Moizuddeen, and his being found in the Palace. The Subidar in his defence says, that he did his utmost to prevent the men from firing; that they abused and threatened him for so doing, and that finding it impossible to suppress the Mutiny, he sought safety within the iron door of the Mahal. Several Sepoys in their depositions support the assertion of the Prisoner, as to his endeavours to prevent the guard from firing upon the Europeans. These depositions are probably false, as well as the story told by the prisoner; but the reverse of the statement does not stand upon either facts or evidence sufficiently satisfactory to warrant a very severe punishment being passed upon him. From the more recent information that I have been able to collect of the state of the Sepoy mind, and more particularly of the impression created by the extraordinary misery and distress of the Native Officers and Sepoys who have been dismissed the service, I am of opinion that no further act of particular severity is necessary. It would be a sufficient punishment, in my opinion, that the Subidar were dismissed the service.

2. Subidar
Anapah, on
duty on the
Main Guard.

No. 2. The same remarks are applicable also to this case. This Officer was upon the main guard, and was found concealed in the Palace. There is no proof of his activity in the Mutiny. An Evidence Moorteen (Evidence, No. 2.) states, that the prisoner lamented the Mutiny, from whence he wishes it to be inferred that he was not actively engaged, but that notwithstanding he refused to join the witness in his proposition to attempt to suppress it. This Officer should be dismissed the Service.

3. Jemidar Ramasamy, on duty at
the outer gate, came into the Fort.

No. 3. There seems to be no reason why this Officer should not be dismissed the Service.

Class Third, No. 1. outside the Fort.
242 Jemidah Jungumiah.

No. 242. Upon the information and evidence given to the Commission, this Prisoner should be dismissed the Service.

Against these Officers there is no charge but that of temporary absence, which seems natural in the state of fear and alarm that followed the arrival of the Cavalry. Their immediate return is as much in favour of their innocence, as their departure may be considered proof of their guilt. I do not think these Officers, after all that has passed, and the degree of suspicion that must attach to their conduct, should remain in the Service; but, if their guilt is not clearly established, it may be matter of doubt if after so long a period of service they should be consigned to beggary. It is submitted whether to each of them a small pension should not be granted.

The suspicion against these Officers arises in the circumstance of their having been on guard upon a former day, when the Mutiny was to have taken place. This suspicion is, I think very much done away by the fact that when the Mutiny did take place, these Officers did not join in it, which they would have done had they been real Conspirators. I do not see cause why any distinction should be made between these Officers and those mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

Having disposed of the Native Officers, "the punishment of the Native Troops who were on the main guard of Vellore on the night of that event," comes next to be considered. This proposition was originally made by me, and if further punishment were necessary, the distinction would be calculated to increase the effect of the example on the minds of the Troops, by shewing that not only the Mutineers themselves, but that those whose immediate duty it was to preserve order, were equally deserving of punishment. If, however, it should be thought necessary to act upon this principle of selection, the execution is attended with an embarrassment which I did not foresee. By an examination of the depositions, it will be seen that the greater part of the prisoners came in as they state upon *Cowle*, by beat of *Tom Tom*. The Governor in Council may recollect that the Commander in Chief, upon his arrival at Vellore, invited by public Proclamation the Sepoys to return. It is true that the Proclamation stated the innocent only, but, as was natural, the Sepoys gave to it the interpretation which such acts of Authority always bear. It was considered by them to be an amnesty, and upon that confidence it seems that they came in. In a Court of Law, and in strict justice, the Proclamation must be construed by its literal meaning, but in Equity, some allowance should be made for the acceptance of it by ignorant men, who, being absent, only received the publication at second hand, perhaps in the first instance imperfectly translated; and given out in a moment of general confusion, particular phrases and expressions cannot be nicely weighed; and I therefore think this *Cowle*, taken, as it was done, in the ordinary acceptation of such measures, and as those who issued it ought to have known it would have been taken, should exempt those, who in consequence surrendered themselves, from punishment. This will be found to be the condition of the greater part of those composing the Main Guard. I am the less solicitous on this point, from being of opinion that from the long continuance of submission and tranquillity, as well as from the apparent restoration of confidence between the European Officers and the Native Troops, no additional examples of severity, beyond those that justice indispensably requires, need be inflicted.

Liberal as I think the character of the Government for the observance of faith requires that the construction should be, still the benefit should not be granted to individuals guilty of acts of particular atrocity. Crimes against the State the Government may forgive, but crimes against society, condemned by every law human and divine, never should pass unpunished. In this class I place Murderers and Plunderers.

The numbers mentioned in the margin are cases of Plunder. The stolen property was immediately taken from them, and they have since experienced a long and distressing confinement. Their crime has, I think, been already sufficiently punished; and their confinement should cease with the release of the other Prisoners.

Class Third, No 2. Officers off duty
236 Subidar Ismaul Khan
238 Subidar Teremoota Naekun.
239 Jemidar Vanketiah.
241 Jemidah Ran Sing.

137 Subidar
Shaik Madar.
240 Jemidar
Kulham Sing.

Madras Commission,
First Class, No 1
83 Plunder
No 2 4, 5. Plunder
Second Class, No 1.
109 110 Plunder
Vellore Commission,
First Class, No 1
30, 43, 54, 56, 58, 64, } Plunder.
78, 98, 99, 105, 112. }
No 2
135, 165, 191, 204, } Plunder.
207, 218, 330 }
Third Class, No 1
188, 215, 255, 313, 366. Plunder

Madras Commission,
Second Class, No 1
119 Murder.

Vellore Commission,
First Class, No 1
32, 93, 106, 116 Murder.
No 2
134, 146, 151, 375, Murder.
Third Class, No 1.
245. Murder

There are several cases of Murder stated in the margin. These Prisoners should be transferred to the Civil Power for the purpose of taking their Trials before the Court of Circuit.

All the rest of the Prisoners should, in my opinion, be liberated. Their liberation should be gradual. An account should be taken of the Villages in which they intend to reside, and information transmitted to the Magistrates in the several Districts, in order that the attention of the Police may be drawn to them. This precaution is required, not by any danger of engaging in State intrigues, but lest, deprived of the means of subsistence, they may commit depredations upon the Country. It will be necessary that a small sum should be given to each person to defray the expences of his journey

(Signed)

W. BENTINCK.

Fort St. George, Sept. 20th, 1807.

The great delay that has taken place in bringing this subject to a close, has been caused by the difficulty of obtaining accurate translations of the very numerous Depositions.

(k k)

MR. PETRIE'S MINUTE.

THE communications with the Right Honourable the Governor General, when his Lordship was at this Presidency, on the most expedient measure to be pursued for disposing of the remaining Prisoners of the Mutineers at Vellore, are in the recollection of Mr. Oakes, who was present at those discussions; and as the recommendation of our late Right Honourable President is in conformity to the principles we then agreed to proceed upon, I recommend to Council that the proposition of Lord William Bentinck be immediately carried into effect. His Lordship's Paper of Explanation, and the Documents referred to, are now sent in circulation. I have perused them with attention, and although I think stronger shades of guilt attaches to some of them than is admitted in the Report, I am nevertheless of opinion, that, under all circumstances, the measures recommended by the late President should be adopted.

(Signed)

W. PETRIE.

Madras, September 21, 1807.

(l l)

EXTRACT OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S MINUTE.

THE Proceedings of the Commission appointed by the Government of Fort St. George, to investigate the origin of the late Insurrection at Vellore, a Copy of which was received on the 11th instant, and has now been perused by the Members of the Board, afford additional materials for forming a conclusive judgment regarding the causes of that unhappy disorder. These proceedings also elucidate the hitherto obscure, but most important question, of the degree in which the Family of Tippoo Sultaun was concerned, in producing the Insurrection, or aiding its progress.

My opinion regarding the origin of the late calamity, formed upon the documents then in our possession, was submitted to the Board in a Minute under date the 11th ultimo, and the Board unanimously concurred in that opinion. The justice of it has either been left unimpeached, or has been positively corroborated by every successive dispatch in any manner connected with the subject; and the proceedings of the Commission instituted at Vellore have conveyed to my mind a conviction of the justice of that original opinion, which can alone be shaken by the evidence of new facts.

As the testimony of every witness who has afforded any information upon the subject, either before the Military Court of Inquiry or the Commission at Vellore, concurs in ascribing the discontent among the Sepoys originally to the Regulation regarding their Dress and Appearance, and in attributing to the Servants or Dependants of the Palace merely the encouragement of that discontent, subsequently to its manifestation, it appears unnecessary to advert severally to the testimonies upon that point. I deem it proper, however, to state to the Board some remarks connected with the subject, which have been suggested to my mind by a perusal of the Proceedings of the Commission.

It appears to my judgment, that the discontent among the Sepoys was produced, not merely and exclusively by the General Orders regarding the Turband, but by the promulgation of Regulations respecting the Dress and Appearance of the Sepoys, tending to approximate that branch of the Military System to the precision of European Corps, and to produce a considerable degree of similitude between the Dress and Appearance of the Native and European Troops. It appears from parts of the evidence that the Stocks and Waistcoats, as well as the Turband, were a source of apprehension to the Sepoys. The change of the Turband, combined with the other innovations in their Dress, constituted, in my judgment, an adequate cause for the disorders which ensued. It does not however appear, that any discontent was manifested before the introduction of the new Turband. But the apprehension excited by the Turband might naturally be expected to receive considerable corroboration from the corresponding, though anterior, innovation in the Dress of the Sepoys.

The precise time at which the Attendants of the Palace first began to foment the discontents of the Sepoys cannot be positively ascertained, but Jemidai Shaik Cossim (the most credible perhaps of all the evidences) states in the course of his confession, that no attempt of that nature was made by the people of the Palace until the arrival of the new Turband, at which time the Sepoys first shewed symptoms of discontent; and this declaration is corroborated by several other witnesses. One witness however (Shaik Ahmed, a Sepoy of the 1st Battalion 1st Regiment) assigns a date to the discontents, and the instigations of the people of the Palace, anterior to the arrival of the Turband at Vellore, when those discontents were first manifested. He deposed before the Military Court of Inquiry, that, "From the period of the adoption of the Stocks and white undress Jackets, which was long before the 1st Battalion of the 22d Regiment marched from Vellore to Madras, which was on the 22d January, the Attendants, and numerous Moor People inhabitants of the Pettah, and in the interest of the Princes, began to poison the minds of the Troops, by observing that such Dress was very bad and improper, and if they wore the Turbands none of their own Cast would ever give them water; nor, if they died, would any one bury them. If they should wish to intermarry, none would give their daughters to them, and they would even not be allowed to sit down or mix with their own Cast."

This evidence is not distinct; for, although it would seem from Shaik Ahmed's declaration, that these instigations commenced before the actual arrival of the Turband at Vellore (which, as far as can be collected from the documents before Government, did not happen until the month of April or May), yet the terms in which he describes those instigations to have been employed make particular mention of the Turband. It is true, however, that information regarding the Turband may have reached Vellore at the period of time specified by the Witness, since the measure of improving the Turband was first adopted in the month of November 1805 (as appears by a casual passage in one of the dispatches from Fort St. George). The whole body of the evidence, with the exception of that above quoted, is uniform in dating the instigations of the people of the Palace and the Pettah, subsequently to the appearance of discontent among the Sepoys on account of the Turband.

I am disposed to believe indeed, on grounds which I shall state in a subsequent part of this Minute, that the project of Mutiny was conceived by the Native Officers and Sepoys antecedently to any attempts on the part of the People of the Pettah or the Palace to inflame their discontents; and the most that can be conceded under the evidence before us is, that the discontents of the Troops and the instigations of the Palace and the Pettah went hand in hand.

In order to prove that the Regulations regarding Dress were not the cause of the discontent among the Sepoys, one or other of the following facts must be established. either that the discontent existed before the promulgation of those Regulations, or that the discontent of the Sepoys was only ostensibly on account of the Regulations, and that they were actuated by motives corresponding with those which are ascribed to the Princes, or (as it has been termed) the Mussulman interest. I have not hitherto been able to discover the slightest ground of belief that either of those facts existed. I have not observed that either of them have been even asserted.

Let it even be admitted that the Regulations regarding Dress (in which I mean to include particularly the change of Turband) would not have produced discontent, if a malicious construction of those Regulations had not been industriously propagated (a conclusion of which however there is every reason to doubt), still it is manifest that those Regulations were the immediate efficient cause of all that has happened.

That the Family of Tippoo Sultaun, that innumerable persons of inferior rank dispersed throughout India, would take advantage of any state of circumstances which might afford an opportunity to promote the subversion of the British and the restoration of the Mussulman power, cannot be doubted. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that the Family of Tippoo, with the opportunities they had of intriguing at a distance, may have conceived the project of emancipating and restoring themselves to power, and may have addressed themselves clandestinely to those individuals, and that description of persons who naturally desire the subversion of the British empire, still no other semblance of the effect of such supposed intrigues appeared than the discontent among the Sepoys on account of the change in their Dress. The prescribed change in their Dress therefore, even under the admission above described, furnished the efficient instrument of mischief, and the sole means of carrying the assumed views of the Family into effect, and must consequently be considered the direct cause of the Insurrection at Vellore.

But the suspicion of what I have admitted for the sake of argument rests exclusively on the mere assertion of the person described as a Subidar of distinguished character and services in the Native Cavalry, in his conversation with Major Munro, "that a number of persons formerly in the Sultaun's service, or their Relations, were now serving in our Native Regiments, and were most active instruments of spreading disaffection" — "and that the Agents or the Friends of the Family were employed all over the Country, that their intrigues extended to every place, and were carried on with activity above the Ghauts." I do not mean to intimate any doubt of the fidelity and attachment of this Subidar, but it may justly be supposed that this was merely conjecture on his part. Can it be imagined that the Subidar obtained his information only between the date of the Mutiny and that of his communication (which must have been on or before the 31st July)? If he did, his information must obviously be considered to stand upon very doubtful grounds. The term of 20 days would not admit of his acquiring information relative to a Conspiracy so widely extended, excepting only through the information of others within the sphere of his personal communication; in which case the truth of his relation must depend, not upon his own credit, but upon the credit of his informants. If, antecedently to the Mutiny, the Subidar had obtained a knowledge of the existence of those intrigues, having neglected to communicate it, his fidelity and attachment may reasonably be doubted. It seems however more reasonable to conclude that he had stated conjecturally the causes of the Mutiny, and declared what he considered to be the probable cause, in terms which unintentionally indicated a positive knowledge of it.

His information is unsupported by any collateral evidence or positive fact, which has come within the knowledge of Government; whereas the cause to which I have ascribed the discontent of the Sepoys is demonstrated, by every witness who has been examined upon that point, and has been controverted by none.

The Subidar darkly hints at a general disaffection to the British Government throughout the Country. No traces of it, however, appear in the documents which have been transmitted to us; and it will be in the recollection of the Board, that in a late letter to the Government of Fort St. George we had reason to state our opinion, founded on documents received

from that Presidency in the months of January and February last, that the general attachment of the Natives subject to the Presidency of Fort St. George had undergone a considerable improvement.

The dissatisfaction which has appeared among the Sepoys at Vellore, whether excited by the instigation of others or not, is proved and admitted to have been solely on account of the Regulations regarding their Dress.

We have the most positive information from the Resident at Hyderabad, that a disposition to Mutiny, on account of the new Turband, prevailed to an alarming extent in the Subsidiary Force stationed at that Capital. It is true some grounds of suspicion exist, that the discontent of the Sepoys of that Corps also was inflamed by secret machinations, but that the change of the Turband was the operating cause, and the sole instrument of those machinations, is established beyond the possibility of doubt; and the abrogation of the obnoxious Order immediately calmed the impending tumult. That a notion extensively prevailed of a design on the part of Government gradually to convert our Native Troops to Christianity, founded on the Regulations regarding their Dress, is further confirmed by a late dispatch from the Resident at Nagpore, who was interrogated by the Minister of the Court of Nagpore upon that point.

The Members of the Commission appointed by the Government of Fort St. George to ascertain the causes of the Mutiny, have observed in their Report, that, "It is not easy to calculate upon the motives which may have actuated a large body of men composed of different Casts, Religions, and Countries, and acting for a period of time sufficient to admit of new feelings and interests, calculated to divert the original impression to a different object."

From this observation I infer it to be the opinion of the Commission, that the Regulations regarding the Dress of the Sepoys was not an adequate cause of revolt and insurrection. This opinion I consider to be altogether erroneous: all who are conversant with the character of the Natives of India well know, that a more powerful motive to insurrection and revolt cannot be conceived, than a measure on the part of Government tending, however remotely, to excite in the minds of its Native Subjects an apprehension of a design to invade the freedom of their Religious Opinions, Ceremonies, and Prejudices, still more so if they are led to suppose that such a measure is a prelude to the introduction of our own Religion among them. The force of that principle of action must be estimated, not by our conceptions, nor by our intentions, nor yet by the inoffensive nature of the innovations, tried by the test of the Mahomedan or Hindoo Code, but by the jealous prejudices and ignorant fears of the Natives themselves. Such an apprehension once disseminated constitutes an adequate motive to any degree of mischief that the imagination can conceive. It equally affects all Casts and all Religions existing among our Native Subjects.

To account for a declared object of the Insurrection at Vellore, that of restoring the Government of the Family of Tippoo, it is not necessary to suppose that it was originally planned by the Members or Partizans of that Family. Admitting (as is deducible from many of the depositions, and especially from the confession of Shaik Cossim), that the Native Officers and Sepoys, irritated or alarmed by the change of Dress, had determined to revolt, they naturally required a rallying point. The most obvious and proximate instrument of success was the restoration of the Government of Tippoo Sultaun's Family. The views therefore of the Insurgents, and of the ambitious among Tippoo's Sons, or the turbulent Partizans of the Family, entirely coincided, and, without ascribing the mutinous disposition of the Sepoys to any other cause than the Regulations regarding Dress, it is at least as probable that the project of declaring the Government of Moiz-ooodeem originated with the Insurgents, as that the Prince or his Adherents projected the accomplishment of that ambitious project, by exciting the Sepoys to revolt.

I am aware, that in defence of the proposition that the Mutiny at Vellore is ascribable to a cause distinct from the Discontent on account of the Regulations regarding the Dress of the Sepoys, it may be urged that some of the Native Officers concerned in the Mutiny were sensible of the absurdity of the prevalent report respecting the design of Government to effect

their conversion to Christianity; and of the defect of any real grounds of complaint against the Turband, as affecting the Religious Tenets of the Natives. That the Native Officers in general were free from the prejudice against the Turband entertained by the Sepoys appears by no means substantiated by any part of the evidence before us; of the contrary indeed there is strong testimony in the confession of Shaik Cossim, and in the deposition of other witnesses. The supposition, however, is in some degree supported by the declaration which some of them are stated to have made when interrogated upon the subject, that there was no objection to the Turband. But, admitting this supposition to any extent to which its admission can be reasonably required, the real discontent of the Sepoys on account of the Turband still remains uncontroverted, and the effect of the Turband in producing discontent and alarm is unquestionably established by the Reports upon that subject from the President at Hyderabad. It seems impossible to ascribe to the inventive industry of a few Native Officers the impression of disgust and alarm at the Turband entertained by the Sepoys, not only at Vellore, but throughout the Subsidiary Force of Hyderabad; nor will the cause of their discontent be changed even if it could be established that the notion regarding the Turband, and the supposed views of Government, was instilled into the minds of the Sepoys with a view to excite them to Mutiny. As I have already observed, to prove that the Regulations regarding Dress were not the cause of the disposition among the Sepoys to Mutiny, it is necessary to demonstrate that they were influenced by other motives; the contrary of which is manifest from every testimony relating to that question.

It may also be urged in defence of the proposition above stated, that an opportunity was afforded by Colonel Forbes, after he had received information of the intended Mutiny on the 17th June, to the Sepoys, to make known their grievances, and to obtain redress; Colonel Forbes having on the following morning conversed with Shaik Alli, the Native Adjutant, apprizing him of the information he had received, and observing to him that if there was really any dissatisfaction on account of the Turband, it was only necessary for the Sepoys to state it regularly, and the matter would be redressed. But the Native Adjutant assured him there was not the slightest ground for believing the information which the Colonel had received relative to the projected Mutiny, and that the Battalion (meaning the 1st Battalion 1st Regiment) were all perfectly satisfied with the Turband, and vying who should first get it ready to wear. It may be maintained therefore upon this ground, that if any discontent really existed among the Sepoys on account of the Turband, they would have taken advantage of this opportunity to obtain the prohibition of it, rather than adopt the desperate cause of Mutinying.

This point must be considered under two suppositions: First, that the Native Adjutant was ignorant of the projected Mutiny; and secondly, that he was a party concerned. That he was not a party concerned, may perhaps be inferred from what Mustapha Beg, Colonel Forbes's informant, stated, *viz.* that the Mutineers intended to destroy the Native Adjutant also, whom they branded with the name of Haups. But the Native Adjutant professed his ignorance of the intended Mutiny, and asserted that the Sepoys made no objection to the Turband. If so, the Native Adjutant had no occasion to communicate, and it must be supposed did not communicate, to the Sepoys this offer of redress. But the Native Adjutant's assertion that no discontent existed, cannot be considered to counterbalance the uniform evidence to the contrary.

If the Native Adjutant was a party concerned, it certainly may be alleged with some foundation that some other motive actuated him and the leaders of Mutiny than merely a grievance on account of the Turband, which Colonel Forbes apprized him would be redressed on a proper representation. In that case, however, it is not probable that the Native Adjutant would communicate this offer of redress to the Sepoys; there is therefore no ground of belief that the Sepoys were encouraged to expect redress by a proper representation.

The hope of obtaining it by representation must indeed have been completely repressed by the example of the 2nd Battalion 4th Regiment, upon whom the Turband had been forced, against their avowed disgust, by Military severity. It is possible, that even supposing the Native Adjutant to have been concerned, he may have entertained the same sentiment with regard

to the little probability of obtaining redress. But the operating cause of Mutiny among the body of the Sepoys, demonstrated as it has been by every part of the evidence, still remains the same, whether the Native Officers were or were not influenced by it.

That they, however, were also influenced by it, is supported by many parts of the evidence; and it is remarkable that Mustapha Beg, in communicating to Colonel Forbes the secret conversation which he had overheard between Havildar Dowd Haun and another man, stated his having collected from their conversation, "that they were discoursing about a new fashion of Turband, which was about that time proposed to be introduced into the Army, which they called a Topee, or Hat." Wherever any testimony is afforded of the Secret Consultations where the Native Officers presided, the Turband is invariably mentioned as the subject of their discourse, and the motive to Insurrection; and it is unnecessary to adduce the numerous proofs which exist of this fact.

(Signed)

G. H. BARLOW.

*Fort William,
September 24th, 1806.*

